1	PUBLIC HEARING FOR THE
2	DEWEY-BURDOCK UNDERGROUND
3	INJECTION CONTROL DRAFT PERMITS
4	AND PROPOSED AQUIFER EXEMPTION
5	
6	
7	May 11, 2017
8	1:00 p.m. to 8:07 p.m.
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10	St. James Catholic Church
11	310 Third Avenue
12	Edgemont, SD 57735
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REGIONAL JUDICIAL OFFICER SUTIN: Good afternoon, everyone. We're going to get started. Thank you all for coming today. My name is Elyana Sutin, and I am the Regional Judicial Officer for the Environmental Protection Agency in Denver, Colorado. I will be presiding over the hearing today.

In addition to myself, we have other staff for EPA here to assist to ensure that everybody one who wants to make comments today has the ability to do so. So I want to introduce those folks to you. In case you have any questions, you can reach out to one of them.

Douglas Minter is sitting here at the table.

Douglas is the manager of the Underground

Injection Unit in the Office of Water Protection

at EPA.

Valois Shea works with Douglas in the Underground Injection Unit.

Lynne Newton is back here at the registration table. She also works with Douglas and Valois.

Lisa McLain-Vanderpool is back here. She is our Public Affairs Specialist in the Office of Communications.

And then we also have Sisay Ashenafi, who is in our Community Involvement Office. He's a Community Involvement Specialist.

On March 6, 2017, EPA issued two draft
Underground Injection Control, or UIC,
permits -- excuse me -- area permits to
Powertech USA, Inc., for injection activities
related to uranium recovery near Edgemont,
South Dakota.

The draft permits include a UIC Class III area permit for injection wells for the in-situ recovery of uranium and a UIC Class V area permit for deep injection wells for disposal of treatment of in-situ recovery process waste fluids.

The EPA is also proposing an aquifer exemption approval for -- in connection with the draft UIC Class III area permit. We are here today to listen to your comments on these area permits and aquifer exemption.

The public comment period is open until
May 19th, 2017. Today is the last of five
hearings that we've held in relation to this
project. The first was in Valentine, Nebraska
two weeks ago; we had hearings in Rapid City on

Monday and Tuesday; and yesterday we had hearings in Hot Springs.

In a moment, Ms. Shea will explain in a little bit more detail about the project that is being proposed today. But before I turn it over to her, I just want to explain a little bit about how the hearing will work today.

We will take testimony from 2:00 to 5:00 with a possibility of a short break, and then we will take an hour break from 5:00 to 6:00, and then come back and take more testimony from 6:00 to 8:00. I will call speakers to the microphone up here if you have filled out a card at the registration table. So if you would like to speak and have not filled out a card, please do so.

When it is your turn to speak, please state your name before you begin your testimony. In order to be fair to everyone, we will limit testimony to five minutes each. We will signal to you when you have one minute left to speak with a yellow triangle. And then when your five minutes is up, the red stop sign will be lifted, and I will ask you to complete your testimony.

Please try and be respectful of the time so

that everyone who wants to speak has the opportunity to do so. Please try to be as succinct and on point as you can. If I find you are straying from the topic at hand, I will interrupt and ask that you please return to the issue before us.

If we have time at the end and everyone has had the chance to speak who wants to and you have more to say than the five minutes you were given, then I will allow folks to come back up and finish their comments.

After you finish your testimony, members of the panel may ask clarifying questions. We are not here today to explain the basis for the proposal -- the notice does that -- nor can we engage in back-and-forth discussion of the proposal or respond to your comments during this hearing.

The purpose of the hearing is to receive your input. We will consider and then respond to all comments received during this hearing as well as all written comments in the final permits and aquifer exemption determination. As I said, we will not be answering questions during the hearing.

We are recording the hearing today, so be assured that your comments will be considered. The court reporter sitting to my left will be preparing a transcript of today's proceeding that will be available for anyone who wants to see it. The transcript is part of the record and will be included in the docket for this matter.

The docket is where EPA collects materials it has considered in its action, including public comments. The docket is available on the internet for review, or you can review a hard copy in Denver's -- EPA's Denver office. The transcript of this hearing will also be available on the docket.

If you have written comments of your testimony, please give a copy to our staff at the registration table, or you can leave it here with me. This will be helpful as the court reporter prepares the transcript. If you have other written comments or supporting documentation, you may also leave that with us, and we will make sure they are entered into the docket for this action.

You also may submit written comments

directly to the docket through May 19th.

Instructions for submitting comments can be

found at the registration table.

Once the final permits are issued and the aquifer exemption determination has been made, anyone who participated in these hearings, either through oral testimony or written comments, has the right to appeal the Agency's decision to the Environmental Appeals Board.

At this time, I'll turn it over to Ms. Shea, who's going to provide a little bit more background and information.

MS. SHEA: Good afternoon, everyone. Thank you so much for coming to our public hearing today.

I'm just going to give as brief a presentation as I can to kind of explain the background and context for the comments you're going to hear today, and explain a little bit about the permit requirements that we're asking you to comment on.

First, I would like to talk about the
Underground Injection Control program so you
understand what we do in our program. This
program is authorized under the Safe Drinking

Water Act. Its mission is to protect underground sources of drinking water from injection through injection wells.

An underground source of drinking water is defined in the UIC regulations as an aquifer or portion of an aquifer which supplies any public water system, or which contains a sufficient quantity of groundwater to supply a public water system, and currently supplies drinking water for human consumption, or contains fewer than 10,000 milligrams per liter total dissolved solids.

The UIC program classifies injection wells into six classes based on the type of injectate and the purpose for injection. The two classes we'll be talking about today are Class III, which is for the in-situ recovery of a mineral deposit, in this case uranium, and then a Class V, which is -- Class V deep wells, which inject into or above an underground source of drinking water, in this case for the disposal of treated ISR waste fluids. Our regulations allow us to exempt a portion of the USDW if it meets certain criteria.

As Judge Sutin said, we issued two draft

area permits on March 6, 2017. I guess I already talked about the first and second draft permits. So the Class III area permit is for injection wells for in-situ recovery of uranium from the Inyan Kara aquifers.

And then the second is a Class V area permit for deep injection wells that will be used to inject treated ISR waste fluids after they are treated to meet radioactive and hazardous waste fluids standards, and that will be injected into the Minnelusa aquifer.

The EPA is also proposing an aquifer exemption in connection with the Class III area permit that will exempt the uranium portion -- uranium-bearing portions of the Inyan Kara group aquifers in that area where the Class III injection wells will be injecting for the purpose of mobilizing the uranium in the ore deposit so that it can be recovered.

The EPA also did three other documents that we are taking comment on. One was a draft Environmental Justice Analysis document. The second is a Cumulative Effects Analysis document, which looks at the effects of all the injection wells under the area permit. And then

a draft document explaining the process and consideration of our tribal consultation process.

We began tribal consultation a couple years ago, sent out an invitation letter. And at that time, eight tribes responded, and we've met with seven of the tribes. We are expecting to continue our consultation process further, hopefully meeting with additional tribes. And we will not issue any final draft permit decisions until our tribal consultation process is complete.

And we are requesting review and comment on all of the documents, and they can be found on our website. And the public notice has that website, and the public notice is sitting on that table over there.

There are other agencies that regulate the

Dewey-Burdock site. One is the Nuclear

Regulatory Commission, which has issued a

license for the site. The South Dakota

Department of Environment and Natural Resources

has proposed a large-scale -- a large-scale mine

permit which regulates the whole site. They

have not yet finished their public review

process.

The Bureau of Land Management has a plan of operations, and I don't know the status of that plan of operations yet. And then there's another draft permit or proposed permit from the DENR for the groundwater discharge permit for the land application and the treated ISR waste fluids on the surface in case the Class V injection wells cannot be permitted or used or do not dispose of the full volume of waste fluids that need to be disposed of.

So this shows the map of the Dewey-Burdock area. I just have to figure out what -- there we go. It's -- this is the permit boundary. It lies along the South Dakota-Wyoming border here, and this is the border between Fall River and Custer Counties. There are -- there's the Dewey area -- Dewey area, and the Burdock area.

There are four proposed wellfields in the Dewey area and ten proposed wellfields in the Burdock area. The color codes here that show the outline of the ore deposits are based on which Inyan Kara aquifer the ore deposit is located in. And then these dots are the proposed locations for the two deep Class V

injection wells.

This is the Cheyenne River running just south of the site, and then it travels further down to where we are today in Edgemont. And Beaver Creek is a tributary to the Cheyenne River. Pass Creek is also a tributary, but it's not shown here because it's not -- it doesn't flow all year round, so it didn't make it onto this map. But it's there.

So this slide gives an idea of what the wellfield layout will be. These -- this grid pattern is the pattern of injection wells and production wells. The injection wells will be used to inject the lixiviant, which consists of the groundwater from the Inyan Kara Aquifer with carbon dioxide and oxygen added in order to mobilize the uranium, and that fluid will be brought to the surface through a production well. So that's the grid you're seeing here.

This line of wells on the outside of the perimeter are monitoring wells, and I'll explain more about them in a different slide. And then this dashed green line is the aquifer exemption boundary, which is located 120 feet outside of the perimeter monitoring well.

So I just wanted to talk a little bit about the quality of the Inyan Kara aquifers.

Naturally occurring Inyan Kara groundwater outside of the wellfields is naturally high in sulfate, manganese, and in some places iron.

In order for it to taste good to drink, it has to be treated with reverse osmosis. In the area where the uranium deposits are located, the wells there also show high levels of gross alpha, radium, and radon.

So it can be treated for drinking to remove these, but you still will get the gross alpha, radium, and radon if you take a shower or launder your clothes. So the radioactive decay series of uranium eventually results in radium, which quickly decays to radon and daughter elements which emit alpha radiation.

Human skin can block alpha radiation, so it's not a threat to you outside your body, but if you were to breathe in the radon gas, it does decay inside your lungs, and that's the danger you hear from radon. So there's an increased risk of wells in this area for radon exposure.

This is a vertical cross-section through the Inyan Kara aquifers, and I color-coded the

uranium deposits to match the maps. So you can see that the red are in the lower Chilson, the green in the Upper Chilson, and then the blue were in the Lower Fall River. And this is the vertical extent of the proposed exemption area.

And then once again, the exemption -- I have lost my -- there it is. I guess it takes awhile to warm up. So this is the proposed boundary, 120 feet outside of the perimeter monitoring well ring.

This diagram is kind of a cartoon of the ISR process. And I talked about, the lixiviant is injected into the injection wells, pulled through the uranium ore deposits, pick up the uranium, and then brought to the surface through the production wells, taken to the processing plant where uranium is removed from the solution, and then most of the water comes back to be recycled through the uranium ore deposit, and more oxygen and CO2 is added.

So you're hearing about a maximum pumping rate of 8,000 gallons per minute. Most of that water does -- is recycled back, but a percentage, 1 to 3 percent for most of the time, is bled off. And that's the amount of water

that would be lost from the Inyan Kara aquifer by this process.

If the EPA ever does issue a final permit, Powertech would not automatically be allowed to start injecting and recovering uranium. There are a number of tests required to characterize the geology and hydrology for each of the wellfields that you saw.

And the crucial question being answered by all the data that they have to collect and that we would analyze is, can the uranium-bearing fluids be contained both horizontally inside this ore-bearing injection zone and also vertically?

And the major test that will provide us that information is a wellfield pump test. So this line demonstrates the water table over most of the Dewey-Burdock area. The wells actually flow to the surface.

During a pump test, the water table is lowered into what we call a cone of depression. And if this is possible to maintain through the pump test, that shows us that the groundwater -- let's see. Sorry about that. I forgot which slide my arrow is, my arrow drawing. So that

demonstrates that the groundwater can flow -- be contained by flowing into, towards the wellfield area.

Then we also look at the response in the overlying and underlying monitoring wells during the pump test. And if we don't see any change in water level in these wells, then that tells us that the confining zone is good and the injection fluids can be contained vertically.

So under wellfield operation, we would expect to see the same type of behavior. These are the perimeter monitoring wells. And to demonstrate horizontal containment, we would see the water tables lowered.

If it starts to rise, that's an early warning system that possibly we're losing containment here, and then we have to change the pumping arrangement and recovery -- injection recovery arrangement in order to keep horizontal control of these.

And then the overlying and underlying monitoring wells are monitored throughout the process through groundwater restoration until the groundwater is restored.

So these arrows just demonstrate that the

permit requires that injection interval groundwater is always flowing in towards where the wellfield is in order to contain the injectate from moving away from the wellfield.

So once again, this is -- just talks about how there are numerous requirements for -- requirements for rigorous geologic and hydrologic characterization in both the Class III and the Class V permits, to show that injection activity will not cause migration of injectate into underground sources of drinking water.

And the Class III permit requirements include -- there's several of them, but the major ones that I wanted to talk about is Powertech has to show a map of all the plugged, abandoned exploration drill holes, the historic boreholes you've heard about.

We want to see a map of that located within the perimeter monitoring well ring for each wellfield, and then identify which of those that have to be replugged because they were leaking.

And then we want to see, also, copies of any new or historic drill logs that have been annotated to indicate there was evidence of a

fault or a fracture or a joint for any of the drill holes located inside the perimeter monitoring well ring.

UIC regulations do allow us to approve ISR activity in the areas where there is a breach of confining zone. But in these situations, extra monitoring is required on these breaches to make sure that the fluids are not moving vertically out of the zone.

So this represents a breach through the confining zone. This is the ore deposit that would be developed. We would look -- we would add extra monitoring wells in this area to make sure that no contamination is moving through each of the confining zones.

Then after uranium recovery is completed,
the draft permit requires that once wellfield
restoration is also completed and approved by
the Nuclear Regulatory Commission, then
Powertech has to start implementing its proposed
post-restoration monitoring plan -post-restoration monitoring plan. It's hard for
me to say.

This plan we would look at before the wellfield pump tests have to begin because we

have to -- we want to see a boundary downgradient of the wellfield. These arrows represent the direction of groundwater flow.

And we would have Powertech choose where they want to put a boundary of monitoring wells so that we can have them monitor any contaminant movement out of the wellfield that might occur after groundwater restoration is complete.

Because the final compliance boundary is our aquifer exemption boundary here, the underground source of drinking water lies outside it but the permit requires that no ISR contaminants may move across this aquifer exemption boundary into the underground source of drinking water.

We want to find out if there are any contaminants before they get to the aquifer exemption boundary, so Powertech would choose a good location for this monitoring boundary and then monitor it to detect contaminants.

If contaminants are detected, then they have to have a backup line of monitoring wells, and they have to do some sort of remediation to clean up the source inside the wellfield and then also the contamination. And then this would be an iterative process.

If contamination continues to move, then there is another line of monitoring wells and requirements for cleanup until finally they can demonstrate that no contaminants would cross the aquifer exemption boundary.

I probably just -- oh, to do this, we do have to establish baseline constituent concentrations, and that would be the permit limit. We want to make sure that no contaminants cross in concentrations above what's already there.

The baseline monitoring would begin before the wellfield pump tests, and then the strategy for developing the baseline and for monitoring the compliance boundary is based on RCRA, the Unified Guidance, which is the statistical analysis that establishes baseline and detection of contaminants. And this strategy has been implemented for many years by the RCRA program and has proven successful, so we're relying on it here too.

Now, the deep Class V injection wells, we are requiring the most protective, stringent well construction requirements that we have under our regulation, and that's for Class I

wells, to make sure that the wells are well-constructed and will not allow leakage through confining zones or from the well.

And there are also numerous requirements for rigorous geologic and hydrologic characterization to verify the injection activity does not migrate -- cause migration of injectate into USDWs.

The other important aspect is that Powertech must demonstrate that in the area where the injection wells are located, the Minnelusa aquifer is not an underground source of drinking water, which means that it would have total dissolved solids above 10,000 milligrams per liter.

We do have a historic sample from an oil and gas test well in that area that showed in that location the Minnelusa is 16- to 21,000 milligrams per liter. Let's -- if it turns out that once the wells are drilled and the Minnelusa aquifer has total dissolved solids below 10,000 milligrams per liter, then it would be an underground source of drinking water and no injection would be allowed. The EPA would not authorize any injection into that.

The Class V permit does require the injectate is treated to below radioactive waste standards and hazardous waste standards.

This is a geologic cross-section that just shows the Minnelusa formation through this area. This would be the Minnelusa injection zone.

There is a thickness at the base that acts as a confining zone between the Minnelusa injection zone and your Madison aquifer. We wanted to make sure that there's adequate confinement so that no contaminants migrate down to the Madison.

And then we would also look at this upper confining zone that protects the Hunkpapa and Sundance aquifers as well as the Lakota, the Chilson, and Fall River aquifers of the Inyan Kara.

I think I'm going to skip ahead to the next.

I can come back to this. So the Minnelusa is a very interesting aquifer. It actually has — its character changes across this boundary called a dissolution front. Close to the outcrop, the overburden of the Minnelusa is not heavy enough to overcome the pressure of the Madison aquifer. Go back to this slide.

The Madison is a very high-pressure aquifer, and as you know, down here it flows to the surface, and the Minnelusa aquifer is not a high-pressure aquifer.

So in areas where the overburden is thin, the Madison aquifer has actually pushed through and dissolved out this anhydrite mineral that composes most of the Minnelusa aquifer.

Anhydrite is a sulfate, a calcium sulfate, and it's what causes the Minnelusa to have high total dissolved solids and not be a USDW in areas farther away from its outcrop.

So around Hot Springs, this anhydrite has been dissolved away by the Madison limestone.

And you can see what's called a collapsed breccia in the Minnelusa formation that you can actually see at the surface in Hot Springs.

And there are a lot of drinking water wells of good quality near Hot Springs because there is -- all the anhydrite has been removed. And the zone of active dissolution of the anhydrite is what is shown along this line here.

So above, to the northeast of this dissolution front, you get good quality -- drinking water quality in the Minnelusa aquifer.

Downgradient of the dissolution front, you still have all that anhydrite mineralization, and that's what causes the Minnelusa not to be an underground source of drinking water in the Dewey-Burdock area.

This slide shows that same dissolution zone that was shown in red, and it kind of covers this area. Hot Springs is here. The Dewey-Burdock area is over here. All these dots are either oil and gas wells or test wells that were drilled looking for oil and gas. And many of them actually, in the record on the state website, contain the drilling logs.

And I was able to -- I looked at all of these wells, and you can actually see there's thick Minnelusa with lots of anhydrite down in this area. It's starting to fade away. Many of these well logs show missing anhydrite and thin Minnelusa, and then up here it's -- the Minnelusa is much thinner and there's no anhydrite. So this also can be verified looking at oil and gas wells. I think I probably talk about that in this slide, too.

So the Class V permit requirements, we want to verify the integrity of that Minnelusa

confining zone by looking at the drill logs of the deep Class V wells themselves and then the plugged oil and gas wells shown in the previous slide.

Also looking at the groundwater levels of the Minnelusa and the Madison aquifers, as I said, the Madison aquifer is very high-pressure. It has a high groundwater level that's above the ground.

The Minnelusa doesn't have as high of a pressure, so we expect to see different levels when we -- when Powertech, if they drill these wells and actually isolate and measure the groundwater levels, we expect to see different water levels in the Minnelusa and Madison aquifers.

Then also looking at the sulfate concentration, where we have that anhydrite in the confining zone where you see high sulfate, in that area where there isn't a confining zone, that's where the sulfate is low and it's drinking-water quality.

Then also we will look at a comparison of the Madison and Minnelusa water chemistry.

Where there is -- where they are separate and

have a good confining zone, it's very different water chemistry. But up near Hot Springs where there is no confining zone between the Madison and the Minnelusa, the water chemistry looks very similar, almost the same.

I just wanted to mention quickly that there are treatment and storage ponds for the Class V injectate. Radium is the only radioactive waste expected to occur in our ISR waste fluids. As I mentioned, uranium does eventually decay to radium, and that's the longest-lived radioactive element we expect to see.

It can be treated and removed from the injectate by mixing it with -- mixing the waste fluids with barium chloride and then putting them into these settling ponds where the barium settles out the uranium. And then it flows into these outlet ponds, and it would flow, then, to the Class V injection well, where it would be expected to meet radioactive waste standards.

This is my final slide. I just want to emphasize the importance of our public review process to us. We issue draft permits in order to propose a set of permit requirements that we feel are as protective as we can make under our

UIC regulations.

But we know that they are not perfect, and we want your input on how they can be made better. Or if they are just not going to do the job at all, we want to hear that, too.

Our UIC regs require that we have a 30-day comment period. But as I mentioned, the number of documents we have to review, we thought that we should give everyone more time to review these documents, so our public comment period has gone from March 6th to May 19th, which is a week from this Friday.

Our regulations also require us to hold a public hearing if one is requested, but we knew we wanted to hear from as many people as we possibly could, so that's why we scheduled five days of public hearings. And let's get to that now. We want to hear your comments.

Jacque is going to record them for us, and then we will respond to those before we issue a draft permit. Thank you very much.

REGIONAL JUDICIAL OFFICER SUTIN: Okay. Let's get started.

Our first speaker is Bill Curran.

BILL CURRAN: Good afternoon. I'm Bill

2 REGIONAL JUDICIAL OFFICER SUTIN: We need
3 you to -- yeah, please. Thank you. That way

the court reporter can hear you.

BILL CURRAN: I'll start again.

Good afternoon. Bill Curran. I have a small hobby ranch up in the general area --

I have a small hobby ranch.

COURT REPORTER: I can't hear. I'm sorry.

Just pull it up so everybody can hear.

BILL CURRAN: Anyhow, I have a small hobby ranch up in the general area of where this mining project is going to take place, so it's kinds of near and dear to my heart. I don't have anybody leasing my land. I do own mineral rights, but I'm not entertaining any offers from mining companies or anything of that nature.

I did take an interest in this because it is so close to my property, and it appeared to me that we had a lot of people who were objecting to the project on the basis of the emotion. We had government looking at this with science and saying, Yeah, it looks safe. And it appears that way that most of the permits have now been issued.

A few years ago, there was a hearing that I

believe the State held. If Susan Henderson was here, I would be able to ask her because Susan has been to every one of these. But I can't remember how many years ago it was. It was up at Rapid City at, I believe, the Ramada Inn.

And before the hearing, I went up and down the road and talked to every one of my neighbors and asked them if they were in favor of the project. All of them but one signed a petition in favor of the project. The one that didn't sign it had just moved to the area and didn't know anything about it up or down or whatever.

What I did want to get across today to these folks who have come here to hear us is that all of the local people are in favor of it. The people most directly affected by this mining project are in favor of it. And I want to turn this petition over to them.

They actually are the same -- pretty much the same landowners today that were there then. And like I say, everyone here in the area is in favor of it. I am still in favor of it. I would certainly hope all those were. Thank you.

REGIONAL JUDICIAL OFFICER SUTIN: Thank you, Mr. Curran.

1 Keith Anderson. 2 Don Matt. Yeah, we'll call him --3 I'm sorry. You're here. I apologize. Mr. Matt, you'll be next. 4 5 DON MATT: I had a long walk. 6 KEITH ANDERSON: My name is Keith Anderson. 7 I'm a professional engineer and licensed in 8 South Dakota, Wyoming, and Nebraska. I also 9 live on a ranch 20 miles northwest of Edgemont. 10 I don't think you've heard from a lot of people 11 with sincere concerns about this project over 12 the past several days. I doubt you'll hear from 13 anybody who has more educational background, 14 personal experience, and direct personal 15 interest in the Dewey-Burdock property than I 16 have. I was born and raised on that ranch. It's 17 18 been in our family since 1908. I moved there in 19 1952, and I've lived there off and on ever 20 since. We have a pretty direct connection to 21 the uranium properties. My dad worked -- went 22 to work in the mines in the late 1950s and 1960s 23 to supplement the ranch income. I worked at the uranium mill while I was 24 25 going to college to pay for my college

education. I got out of South Dakota State
University with a degree in engineering and no
college debt, so I have been very much involved
with the uranium business over the years.

My second job after college, I was hired as a hydrologist on the Dewey-Burdock project in 1976, and I worked there in various capacities until 1989. Some of you may have reviewed the hydrology work that was done on the Dewey-Burdock property in the 1970s and '80s. That was done by me or people under my direct supervision.

The aquifer testing that you guys have reviewed in considering this permit was aquifer testing that I did. So I feel I have direct, firsthand knowledge of the project and hydrogeology and geochemistry of this project.

You've heard from a lot of people who have sincere emotional concerns about this project, and I understand that. In a lot of cases, people are fearful for things they don't understand.

I guess what I would hope would be that this country, these kinds of decisions are based on the facts and on knowledge and not based on fear

and emotion.

So I appreciate your taking the time to listen to us today, and I just want to speak in support of granting these permits for Powertech.

REGIONAL JUDICIAL OFFICER SUTIN: Thank you,
Mr. Anderson.

Mr. Matt.

DON MATT: My name is Don Matt. I am currently living in Edgemont, South Dakota. I have a relative whose first wife grew up here. She died of cancer at 37. The only thing he will say is, "Don't drink the water."

As a young man, I lived a few years in Utah where I had to comfort a roommate from St. George, Utah, who lost a 19-year-old brother to cancer. Children there used to write their names in the nuclear fallout dust covering automobiles.

A July 2017 eleven-page special report to The Oregonian printed there were an estimated 400,000 atomic veterans ordered to be nuclear guinea pigs under or near atomic test blasts and the reluctance of government experts to acknowledge ongoing health problems.

Salt Lake's Desert News spent years

documenting the culture of insensitivity and denial of first the Atomic Energy Commission and then the Nuclear Regulatory Commission, a cosmetic change that made little actual difference.

More recently, I knew a Rapid City,

South Dakota photographer who loved vacationing
in the beautiful Utah areas with the
aftereffects of hundreds of uranium mines and
nuclear tests. He died of cancer.

I could not resist picking up a copy of the book titled, The Day They Bombed Utah by John Fuller. The list of nuclear problems and losses is mind-numbing. These countless examples demonstrate an ongoing culture of denial and insensitivity that carries forward to this day.

I can see why regulators would block out things which could cost them their jobs and bring billions of dollars in lawsuits.

According to paid engineers working for the Chinese uranium mining company Azarga, they and the Nuclear Regulatory Commission are best qualified to look after our safety and welfare. Not everyone always sees it that way.

In 2007, then-candidate Barack Obama stated,

quote: "The NRC is a moribund agency that needs to be revamped and has become captive to the industries that it regulates." That's according to a Keene, New Hampshire Sentinel interview."

A ProPublica website article dated

December 26, 2012 on Wyoming in-situ mining

notes, quote: "The Safe Drinking Water Act

forbids injecting industrial waste into or above

drinking water aquifers, but the EPA issued what

are called aquifer exemptions that gave mine

operators at the ranch permission to ignore the

law. Over the last three decades, the Agency

has issued more than 1500 such exemptions

nationwide, allowing energy and mining companies

to pollute portions of at least 100 drinking

aquifers."

A USGS study published by Otton in 2009 found that, quote: "To date, no remediation of an ISR operation in the United States has successfully returned the aquifer to its baseline."

Tree rings throughout the West provide an historic record of droughts lasting as long as 30 years. This would drastically argue against proposed calculations of water recharge.

When tritium from nuclear fallout moved through groundwater in the Inyan Kara group at 15 feet per day, it indicated possible flaws in the rocks or porous lenses. This data was either ignored or explained away.

A recent paper said the 1963 data showing much faster velocity is an unresolved issue.

That's from the South Dakota Academy of Science's Proceedings, Volume 93, 2014, page 28.

Recent experiments by Duke University

published on October 26, 2010 showed placing CO2

underground for greater than 30 [sic] days,

quote, "could pose a risk to overlying fresh

groundwater," unquote.

They further said, quote: "Potentially dangerous uranium and barium increased throughout the experiment -- throughout the experiment in some samples." This showed underground storage of CO2 creates carbonic acid and is not harmless.

No exemption should allow placing nuclear waste in waters which could be used by agricultural animals and thus indirectly by humans. Thank you.

REGIONAL JUDICIAL OFFICER SUTIN: Thank you,

605.721.2600

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Mr. Matt.

Isaiah Cox.

ISAIAH COX: My name is Isaiah Cox, and I am a student at Hot Springs Middle School.

And I see how mining the uranium would be good. It could open up some jobs, but it can also close some jobs, too. For instance, like ranchers and farmers, well, you need water, you know, and I've heard that this will poison the water. So that's not really good, so -- yeah.

Well, animals and plants need water, so -and also, I'm not sure if any of you have heard
of Evans Plunge, but it is pretty much a water
park, you know. Lots of people go there, and
it's one of the -- it's a pretty big company, I
guess -- well, water park.

But if they continue with this, it will close down along with many other places, closing other jobs, too. And yeah, some people told me to, like, speak from my heart, not like write anything down. So yeah, forgive me if I mumble and, like, shake or freeze. Okay.

But anyway, I asked somebody earlier today what the -- what it would be used for. And they said that they don't really know, but it will,

1 like -- they were kind of, do it -- well, they 2 were like, do their research, and then, like, 3 they will get, like, a client, but they don't really know what it would be used for now. 4 5 So I would -- well, I'm against it. I hope 6 you can see this, and yeah -- and, I guess, 7 so... 8 REGIONAL JUDICIAL OFFICER SUTIN: Thank you, 9 Mr. Cox. 10 Kurt Barker. 11 KURT BARKER: Hi. My name is Kurt Barker. 12 I'll put it right next to my mouth. 13 does that sound? Your Honor, Ms. Shea, 14 Mr. Minter, thank you for the opportunity to 15 speak. I commend you for the patience and the 16 discipline to sit through these hearings. And I can't help but think about the priest 17 18 who was responsible for the construction of this 19 building. He used to have a very clever way of 20 acknowledging people who volunteered for very 21 difficult tasks. He would say, "There are a lot 22 of ways to get to heaven, you certainly didn't pick the easiest one." 23 24 And I think if he were here today watching 25 what you are doing, he would probably be

thinking that again. So I just hope the folks here from all over remember that. But thank you for hosting this and entertaining all of our comments.

I grew up in the Edgemont area. My wife and I live west of Edgemont and west of the project area. And as ranchers, we work every day to triangulate concerns about water, grasslands, and cattle in a way that builds soil health, because soil health and water health is the basis of our livelihood and our future.

Accordingly, if this project wasn't protective of our health and environment and especially our water, we wouldn't consider supporting it.

So as you reflect on the many hours of testimony that you've heard so far, four days already, I believe, because this is the fifth day, and the testimony you'll continue to hear, I would simply ask that you consider the real stakeholders in this process, the people who live here and ranch in the project area.

As a stakeholder myself, two thoughts come to mind. The first one is the Nuclear Regulatory Commission has established that --

and I'm going to quote -- that "there are no environmental impacts that would preclude the licensing of this facility." That is a very succinct, clear statement: "There are no environmental impacts that would preclude the licensing of this facility."

The second thought that comes to mind is a broader thought, and that is that uranium is the fuel for nuclear power, of course, and nuclear power is the only carbon-free, large-scale source of power that's available 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

So as I think of these two points -- no environmental impacts and fuel for the only carbon-free, large-scale source of power -- I wonder, shouldn't the property rights of the owners of this fuel be considered?

This uranium is not the property of the horse in town over by Hot Springs or the amateur environmentalists who were shipped in from outside the county. It's the property of the landowners, of which I am one.

The economist Adam Smith said: "The first and chief design of every system of government is to maintain justice to prevent the members of

society from encroaching on one another's property or seizing what is not their own."

Powertech -- Powertech has complied with all the requirements of the law. They have prepared and submitted a full-blown environmental impact statement. They have prepared and submitted a site-specific supplemental impact statement.

The scientists at NRC and at your agency have reviewed both and concluded, again, there are no environmental impacts that would preclude licensing of the facility. Or, to use words that Adam Smith might have used, it would say, There are no environmental impacts that encroach on another's property.

So typical teams at your Agency and at the NRC have determined that this project doesn't encroach on our neighbors, but despite that, you've been asked to deny property rights that help make this country great. That's what it amounts to.

So we urge you to deny the request of others to encroach on our property. I urge you to issue the final permits for this project. And once again, I thank you for your very kind and polite attention.

1 REGIONAL JUDICIAL OFFICER SUTIN: Thank you,
2 Mr. Barker.

Mike Koopman.

MIKE KOOPMAN: Good afternoon.

Let me start with, I was born here in South Dakota. South Dakota gave me an education, which I followed up at the School of Mines. And because of that background, I first started -- when I left college, I worked for Homestake, and then I was offered a chance to join the -- what would be Wyoming's version of the DENR, which they call -- over there it's the DEQ.

And I think I'm probably unique in that being -- having a background in soft rock, I am a geological engineer. I am also a registered professional geologist. I went to work for the state of Wyoming. Some of these in-situ projects were interesting over there.

And some of the early mines were, as you can imagine with any early mining thing, there was heap leach things where they would take the minerals, put them on a rubber sheet, pour that full of acid, and then pull off the remaining solution. That was okay. That was in its

infancy.

And as in-situ went along, the department I was with, we were responsible for looking at more and more in-situ practices. In fact, we were responsible for being part of the siting, part of the construction oversight, part of the -- watching the production returns, monitoring that, and in some cases part of the closure.

So I think I'm probably one of the few, if any, here in South Dakota that has seen the aspect of uranium from not only the enforcement aspect, the environmental aspect.

I also worked in the industry and Shirley
Basin out of Casper for many years. So I've
seen the loop of industry and regulation, et
cetera.

From what I've seen, from the projects that
I was involved with, directly permitting and the
mine plans, et cetera, this project being
proposed right here is probably the optimum from
what I have seen as far as safety, as far as
recovering most, if not all, of the solution
that's being injected.

Some of those early ones were not

necessarily covered by state and federal regs, which is why some of them were pretty bad. This one has a whole slew of constraints. And the opinion by anybody who has looked at this so far from a scientific point is that it's valid, it's safe, and it will work.

And I can tell you, having had hands-on, been in the trenches checking pipes that carry solutions and everything, I can tell you that it's valid and it's safe. And from what I can see from this project, this one would be far above my expectations.

So I know emotions run high when you start talking about water and its availability, but I would encourage the EPA and others involved here to look at the background scientific information, what it supports.

If you need, step to those agencies -- and I would say one would be that agency in Wyoming who has done several of these -- to find out, you know, how things went over there.

Do you have a hiccup once in a while? Sure, you have a hiccup once in a while, as with any mining operation.

AUDIENCE MEMBER: That's poison. That's not

1 a hiccup. That's poison. REGIONAL JUDICIAL OFFICER SUTIN: Excuse me. 2 3 No commenting during folks' testimony. 4 MIKE KOOPMAN: I see a lot of you mouthing 5 objections out there, but I doubt that you've 6 been in the trenches. 7 So I would encourage you to proceed with 8 permitting, to do all you can so this thing gets 9 going soon. It would have a -- such an economic benefit in Fall River and Custer Counties, and 10 11 we could surely use all the above. 12 Thank you very much. REGIONAL JUDICIAL OFFICER SUTIN: Thank you, 13 14 Mr. Koopman. 15 Gardner Gray. 16 GARDNER GRAY: I was going to -- I had a 17 list of what I was going to talk about, some of 18 which I spoke yesterday, so I decided not to 19 repeat that. And so these are not necessarily 20 immediately connected except in the larger 21 picture. And I just -- I won't take much time, 22 I just want to briefly talk about some of those 23 points. I've been reviewing the Black Hills 24 25 hydrology study, which I mentioned yesterday.

And what it says is that the Madison and the Minnelusa are heavily utilized. The Minnelusa is one the largest aquifers in the area, and it's utilized heavily. It isn't a -- it isn't an aquifer that no one uses and is unusable. It's being used, and yet they want to put all this waste into the Minnelusa.

The Black Hills -- oh, the Black Hills water is a recharge, actually, for outside water, for example, in the Ogallala. That's pretty general. The hydraulic connection between aquifers exists, and there are two -- these two aquifers, the Madison and the Minnelusa, are connected to surface water resources. They are not disconnected.

Part of the -- a major part of the success of this operation is the non-transmissibility between aquifers. Well, this shows that there is transmissibility, that they do connect and that they're hydraulically connected.

There are numerous fractures -- it goes on to mention there are numerous fractures and solutions, and openings that have created extensive secondary porosity and permeability.

Just another example of these aguifers are not

impermeably protected.

Both the Madison and the Minnelusa aquifers are potential sources for numerous large artesian springs in the Black Hills and hydraulic connection between the two aquifers in other locations.

So once again -- I mean, this is the Black
Hills hydrology study. I didn't write it. I
just read some of it. I am not a hydrologist,
so I don't make up my own opinions. I look at
this. And if that's what it says, then I think
these guys know what they are doing.

Apparently, because I'm opposed to this, I'm an irrational, emotional person, but I would take issue with that. I'm concerned for the water in the area, not just for east of here, but for here.

If you lose your water, you won't have to worry about raising cattle or growing grass because you're not going to be able to do it.

There are ranchers in the Nebraska outfit that have sold their land, sold their cattle, and moved out of town because the contamination in that area from that ISL mining.

And it's been mentioned already that there

is no ISL mine that has ever been cleaned up.

It's just a fact. I don't make these things up.

I read them, and if I -- if I honor the source,

then that's what it means. That's what it says.

There's an ISL mine in Texas called -- I
think it's the Texas Dome. Same old, same old.
People in the area, they take their water out of
the tap. Well, it's radioactive.

And I take issue with the statement that only -- that radium is the only solution, only toxin that is a result of this mining when the NRC clearly states in their application from this company, Azarga, that it's not true.

And as a final statement, I would simply say that Azarga doesn't have to -- Azarga/Powertech doesn't have to clean this up. They aren't required to clean it up because it can't be cleaned up. You cannot clean up radioactive material. It remains radioactive. It might be in a solid, it might be energy, but it's radioactive. You can't lie down next to it, you can't put it in your mouth without getting into trouble. You can't do those things.

They want you to believe that irradiation is safer; all these X-rays we have, they are safe.

1 Well, they are cumulative. Oh, I'm running out 2 of time, aren't I? Well, I already talked a 3 little bit more than I figured I would. So very quickly let me end with this. 4 5 The NRC says that Powertech only has to meet 6 a standard that says A-L-A-R-A, as low as 7 reasonably achievable. It doesn't say they have 8 to clean it up. It says they only have to reach that measure of -- as whatever I said. I'm 9 10 getting too old to do this. 11 AUDIENCE MEMBER: You said, "Reasonably 12 achievable." 13 AUDIENCE MEMBER: "As low as reasonably achievable." 14 15 GARDNER GRAY: There you go, as low as 16 reasonably achievable. It just kind of went out 17 of there. 18 That's no guarantee at all. That's just not 19 a guarantee. It's not enough. I will end with 20 that, and thank you very much for your 21 attention. 22 REGIONAL JUDICIAL OFFICER SUTIN: Thank you 23 very much, Mr. Gray. 24 Sophia Black Cloud. 25 SOPHIA BLACK CLOUD: (Speaking in indigenous

language.)

My name is Sophia Mahpiya Sapa. My traditional name is Flower Woman. I am from the Hunkpapa Tribe, Standing Rock Sioux, the Great Lakota Nation.

I just quickly want to start with saying that on my way in, I wanted to pick up some of the local sage, and I pulled over to grab some to have with me while I spoke. And right in that bush of sage was this turtle shell from Edgemont here in the front of your city.

And so it looked like it hadn't been -there was still some fresh flesh on it. And so
I filled it with the sage from the bush that I
found it in and want it tested. I want to know
if this turtle died of natural causes, things
like that. This is exactly what we're here to
fight for today, is to make sure these
four-legged relatives of ours don't go unspoken
for.

So I have a lot that I want to say. I have been here for the last four days of these hearings, and I've heard everywhere from scientists, doctors, teachers, people from Rapid City, reservations, other states, and

anywhere from our four-legged friends and in between.

So I'd like to start with two things before
I go into my reading, and it was the man that
first spoke about the uranium first here
earlier. He's probably paid by Powertech to say
those things. I've heard many speak on what he
spoke on, and it just -- I've heard the
scientists, I've heard the doctors, I've heard
landowners, so on and so forth.

The second landowner that was in favor of the mining should not have the right to jeopardize or -- you know, he was in favor of the landowners have the right to make that decision for all of us to start mining, and he should not have the right to jeopardize drinking water for the entire Black Hills. Should not.

We are the original landowners. Also, scientists, teachers, doctors, Environmental Protection Agency, so on and so forth, we are the original on that.

So then I'd also like to say before I go on to my reading that these companies, large corporations, they continue today to steal our resources. For instance, in the Black Hills,

we're all talking about our gold, uranium, plutonium, coal, oil, trees by the thousands daily, and the effect of all of that is our water.

All of our resources are being stolen and sold still. You have tried to buy us, and we have said no. You pay anyways, but we don't want it. We don't want your money. We want our Paha Sapa, Black Hills. Paha Sapa.

No uranium. We don't want it. We didn't want it then. We didn't want it in the '50s, '70s, the 2000s, and we sure the hell don't want it now. We didn't want it when you showed up here on your boats. We don't want it. We didn't need it then, we don't need it now.

So I'd like to give you the turtle with the sage in it. And then I'm going to read. It's called, "A Gathering of Sioux in Honor of Chief Sitting Bull."

Sitting Bull said: "We must teach the children to read and write so the white men cannot cheat us, and we must hold onto our land until the young folks can speak English and look out for our own interests."

A gathering of Sioux in honor of Chief

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Sitting Bull, 1890, December 15th. Hunkpapa

Lakota Sioux and other tribal police conspired
with the U.S. Cavalry to attack Chief Sitting

Bull and those who fought to defend him.

On that day, our most honored of all chiefs was held and killed by Sioux warriors. This was the day respect also died for our people.

It is our way to mourn for one year when one of our relatives enters the spirit world.

Tradition is to wear black while mourning our lost one. Tradition is not to be happy, not to sing and dance, and enjoy life's beauty during mourning time. Tradition is to suffer with the remembering of our lost one and to give away much of what we own and to cut our own hair short.

But Sitting -- but Chief Sitting Bull was much more than a relation to just one family. He represented an entire people, our freedom, our way of life, all that we are. And for 127 years, we as a people have mourned our great leader.

We have followed tradition in our mourning. We have not been happy. We have not enjoyed life's beauty. We have not danced or sung as a

proud nation. We have suffered remembering our great Chief and have given away -- given away much of what was ours.

And tens of thousands of Lakota Sioux have worn they hair short for 127 years and blackness has been around us for 127 years. During this time, the heartbeat of our people has been weak, and our lifestyle has deteriorated to a devastating degree.

Our people now suffer from the highest rates of unemployment, poverty, alcoholism, drug addiction, and suicide in the country. We as a people are to blame for this loss of respect within our own nation and for the continuing destruction of our own people. Our only excuse: Ignorance.

Sitting Bull foresaw our stupidity, but we would not listen. Sitting Bull said what would become of our people, and it has. If we are to deal with these problems, we must look into their origin, our present-day leadership.

The new tribal government system has failed to reveal our nation, has failed to protect our people. It is a disgrace to all past Lakota leaders. But the response --

1 REGIONAL JUDICIAL OFFICER SUTIN: Ms. Black 2 Cloud, your time is up. 3 SOPHIA BLACK CLOUD: -- for the destruction --4 5 REGIONAL JUDICIAL OFFICER SUTIN: Please 6 wrap up. 7 SOPHIA BLACK CLOUD: -- of our people's lives 8 must be shared with our second form of 9 leadership, our traditionals -- chiefs, medicine 10 men, pipe carriers. These traditional leaders 11 must accept the fact that they too have not 12 represented their position as they should be 13 represented. 14 The people, the men, and children have been 15 paying the price for inadequate leadership since 16 the death of Chief Sitting Bull. This is the 17 kind of leadership that our people can no longer 18 tolerate, and I'm going to finish up. 19 Are we to continue to die? Are we to 20 continue to watch our children suffer without 21 realizing what must be done without standing 22 together as one force to protect our children's 23 lives? Have we as a people given up? Simply, 24 no, for a whole new generation is born to carry

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out our great Chief's instructions.

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1 We are the new generation, and we will make 2 a change. We will lead ourselves. We will 3 rebuild our nation's respect, and the great Lakota nation will rise again. 4 5 REGIONAL JUDICIAL OFFICER SUTIN: Thank you, 6 Ms. Black Cloud. 7 Miengun Pamp. 8 MIENGUN PAMP: Hi. My name is Miengun Pamp. 9 I spoke two times so far. 10 Obviously I'm here in opposition to the 11 whole project. You know, there's just a lot to 12 say about it, so I don't think I'll sit here all 13 day and spew big, huge emotional speeches at you 14 or anything. I don't have one today. 15 It's just common sense honestly at this 16 point. Like, no matter how foolproof something 17 is, there's always going to be a problem, and 18 when you're dealing with something to this 19 extent, you know, the dangers of it, it's a 20 little ridiculous to take that chance. 21 Like a hiccup, you know, a little bump in 22 the road, that's millions of people. That's, 23 you know, hundreds of lives that would be gone so fast. 24 25 It's a generational problem. Like

genetically, you would be affected, your kids are affected, anything that survived after that would be affected. It's, you know, just a little idiotic to let it go, you know, oh, it'll be fine. But if it's not, there's nowhere to go. There's no out. You wouldn't even know it was happening until it was too late.

Just figured I'd say how I felt one last time, and everybody have a nice day.

REGIONAL JUDICIAL OFFICER SUTIN: Thank you. Debra White Plume.

DEBRA WHITE PLUME: Can you hear me? Okay. Greetings, Mitakuyepi. Greetings to you of the Environmental Protection Agency of the United States of America. My name is Debra White Plume. My Lakota name is Wioweya Najin Win.

I'm Oglala Lakota from the Pine Ridge
homelands, maybe 60 miles south of here. And I
am Cheyenne on my mother's side, Northern
Cheyenne, who escaped from prisoner of war
status at Crawford, Nebraska back in the day.

Now, I'm familiar with Crawford, Nebraska because that's where there's an in-situ leach uranium mine owned by Cameco Incorporated. I'm the lead plaintiff against that corporation.

They want to renew their license and start a new mine, North Trend; a new mine, Three Crow; a new mine, Marsland. One of the men who used to work for Cameco at Crow Butte, he's part of Powertech and Azarga.

I don't trust these uranium corporations
because I've been in this battle for the
protection of sacred water for 27 years now.
When we filed against Cameco, we were the first
ones to challenge a uranium corporation in
America in 17 years. That was ten years ago.
It's been 27 years now since anybody challenged
a uranium corporation.

Now, this place where we stand here today is our ancestral territory. You're not the first peace commission to come out here. One came 149 years ago and negotiated the 1868 Fort Laramie Treaty, the 1851 Horse Creek Treaty with our ancestors. That treaty retained a land base and water right where we stand here today. This is my people's land.

We call the Black Hills He Sapa. To us it's the heart of everything that is. Now, I don't want you to let Azarga encroach on our ancestral territory. This is not just a little community

of Edgemont. This is not just a little county.

This is ancestral territory of the Lakota

nation, the Cheyenne nation, the Arapahoe

nation.

Now, you heard about a hiccup. For us -- I mean, what happened in Hanford is not a hiccup. Fukushima is not a hiccup. At Cameco, their deep disposal wells leaked disposal waste for four years before they found that leak. Now, these mines up here, they leaked in the disposal wells, too.

I don't want you to approve a permit that's going to allow them to punch 4,000 holes through our aquifer. I don't want you to give them a permit that's going to allow them deep disposal wells. Because as much as the industry stacks the deck, bringing specialists here on the payroll, they are still not perfect science about uranium mining.

Ask the people at Fukushima, ask the people at Hanford, ask the people living nearby Cameco, and they'll tell you.

This is a public comment period, not a time for scientists and experts to come up here and impress each other with their big words. This

is time for everyday people like me to come and speak to you government officials.

I'm a mother, I'm a grandmother, I'm going to be a great-grandmother in November, the first time I'm going to be a great-grandmother. I want my takoja tiwahe's baby to come into a world where there's clean water. I want her to stand here someday as a great-grandmother, welcoming her great-grandchild into a world where there's clean water. I'm going to tell you, to the Lakota people, water is our first medicine. We know it's finite.

It came here from the Star Nation. The water that's here is the water that was here when the dinosaurs came. There is no more water, people. I ask you to look at your papers when you go home and think about the Minnelusa. That's a Lakota word. It means swift water, the Lakota aquifer. That's another Lakota word.

These waters are named by our people because we were here since time immemorial, and we want to be here far into the future. These deep disposal wells, they are maybe not just for Azarga. Maybe they want to bring in Cameco's waste from Wyoming, from Nebraska.

You don't know because they didn't line that out, did they? They didn't line that out in their application. I don't trust these people. They are fat, taker corporations, and they want to encroach on us.

Corporations come in to little communities that want jobs, nice homes, a future for their children. That's what Powertech and Azarga did. They came in here. Now they have people standing up saying we're encroaching on Edgemont.

This water is for 16 million people. Beaver Creek, Pass Creek, they flow into the Cheyenne, which is 30 minutes from my home, which flows into the Missouri, which I drink from.

REGIONAL JUDICIAL OFFICER SUTIN: Ms. White Plume, your time is up, so I need you to wrap up your comments, please.

DEBRA WHITE PLUME: Okay. What I want to say is that the -- I mentioned the treaty. I want to mention the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People, which says governments must have free and prior informed consent of Native peoples before they bring development in, and we didn't give that.

Our Oglala Sioux Tribe said no to uranium mining, no to radioactive waste coming in, and I say that, too, on behalf of my grandchildren, my coming generations, all the animals and the standing silent nations, the plants that we need here.

So I ask you to take this home. Take this home to your offices, share your paperwork, share your paperwork and study it. And don't think of this as a science experiment because we live here. So I thank you for coming, and I thank you for listening to me.

(Speaking in indigenous language.)

REGIONAL JUDICIAL OFFICER SUTIN: Clarence Anderson.

Anderson. I've lived in this area most of my life. I began working at the uranium mill in 1960, and I worked there until we shut it down in -- shut the property down in 1989. I had raised my family here. I have four children, nine grandchildren, I have eleven great-grandchildren that have been raised in this area.

And I want you to know that in all of the

work experience I've had, one thing or another,
I have no concern whatsoever about the
technology being used on this project. I also
want you to understand that I was able to raise
a family here because of the income that was
provided at this job for me and hundreds,
hundreds of other people that have worked
through this uranium industry over the years.

I think that one of the things that come to light for me, we were operating in the '50s, '60s, and '70s, the old mining time when we would have went underground, extract the ore, and then bring it into the mill and, press it and grind it, leach it, and strip it.

The same thing that's going to be done by

Powertech, but it'll done in place. It won't be

the disturbance to the ground, the material.

When we were going to mine, we would have

drained the aquifer. We would have had to pump

the aquifer dry to get in there and mine.

This won't be the case here. There is a lot of talk about the water permit and how much water is going to be extracted in this. Valois said earlier, a big share of that will be put back into the aquifer, so -- but I just want to

1 say that I think this is an extremely safe 2 method of operation, and I'm very strongly in 3 favor of it. Thank you. REGIONAL JUDICIAL OFFICER SUTIN: Thank you, 4 5 Mr. Anderson. 6 Ingrid Grimes. Ingrid Grimes? 7 Jim Grimes? 8 Nancy Kile. 9 NANCY KILE: My name is Nancy Kile. I live 10 in Sioux County, Nebraska. I was born and 11 raised in Crawford, Nebraska area. Please 12 accept these as my comments to the formal 13 hearing record. 14 Deceptive language is snake oil, 15 descriptions like uranium recovery, and the use 16 of simple soda pop solutions. Then to top it 17 off, hiding radioactive waste in deep injection 18 wells that pass through groundwater aguifers. 19 Who will cover the cost of having hazardous 20 training for rural emergency responders, contaminated workers, equipment? Who will clean 21 22 up license areas soils that contaminated -- that 23 are contaminated because of toxic wasteland 24 applications? 25 Who will monitor the spray discharge of the

1 evaporation pond poisonous wastewater as it 2 settles on the surrounding fields and prairie? 3 Count on hazardous delivery spills occurring on your county roads. Be ready to evacuate your 4 5 home when it does. If you doubt it, come to 6 Crawford. I'll give you a tour. The casual 7 transport of yellowcake is lethal to wayside 8 communities. Boreholes and toxic flush 9 extraction and mining yellowcake endangers downstream communities far into the future. 10 11 Don't let Cameco bring hazardous poisonous 12 waste up here. Don't do your neighbor like 13 that. Keep it in the ground. No aquifer 14 exemptions. 15 REGIONAL JUDICIAL OFFICER SUTIN: Thank you, Ms. Kile. 16 It's 3:30. We're going to take a ten-minute 17 18 break. We'll start up again at 3:40. 19 (A recess was taken from 20 3:30 p.m. to 3:40 p.m.) 21 REGIONAL JUDICIAL OFFICER SUTIN: Okay. 22 We're going to get started, if folks could take 23 their seats. Our next speaker is Tonia Stands. 24 25 TONIA STANDS: Okay. I just want to start

with this. And I forgot to give this to you yesterday. And I meant to tell you a history, and I was telling that story yesterday about this water. This water is very sought after I have two more. So -- okay. water.

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My name is Tonia Stands, and I'm from Oglala, South Dakota, right east of here. I'm a full-blooded Oglala Lakota woman from Oglala. And I was raised by my grandmas who have direct connection with this land.

I was trying to tell you yesterday. And as a child, I was brought into this area for many different reasons throughout the year. My grandparents, they would come in a certain way into the Black Hills, into these doors, and we're supposed to come in like that.

And so what I was telling you yesterday was, we weren't citizens of this country even though we're the original people to the Black Hills. If you want to talk about stakeholders, you want to bring that into such an area, I mean, that's just like the audacity, you know, an insult to us that you have more, I guess, privilege over us.

And you're using your white privilege to

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come over us and our religious beliefs in connection to this land and what's under this land. So you want to -- you want to talk about stakeholders, you're insulting us. We were forced out of here.

You know, they named Harney Peak after
William K. Harney because the Standing -- Chief
Standing Rock went over there to hunt, and he
left his family there, women and children. And,
you know, General Harney came in and slaughtered
that whole camp, so they named our sacred site
after him.

And that's Inyan Kara, under all -- from that top of this peak, the highest point, that's connected to the bottom of this. And you can't take us away from that because we were born -- and you guys, go to Wind Cave. There's a nice little sign there that says we came out of there. And you'll acknowledge that.

And then come in here and have the audacity to say you're a stakeholder. This land was stolen. This land was taken. And we were forced out to a reservation. And we were disconnected. And we didn't have religious freedom. Look at this church, where we all get

to stand in. You want to be respectful? Let's go stand in our church.

This is our church, this whole Black Hills area, from the top to the bottom. And the reason I know this is because my grandmas, we come from Oglala, and we gather -- we gather our plants and fruits and vegetables, and everything is provided for us here. That's our agreement with this land and the entities, the elements of this land. Those are our relatives.

We come out of -- we come out of Wind Cave, and -- and you want to take that apart and discombobulate that and misconstrue it. But we are the original people to this land. This is the center of the universe, the whole world. The whole universe started right here, and we have those in our language. We have those connections still.

And we have an oath and a duty to protect the sacred because they don't have a voice. They are considered animals, and no, those are our relatives. They have moms and dads, and they drink out of these creeks. And this whole area is our -- is our home. We're the real stakeholders here.

And I come from Oglala, and we still make our trek here and gather our fruits and our vegetables, our food and our medicines. And you know what? Whew. I -- I have a friend that lives in this area, and I gathered some tipsila, which is our fruit. They are all deformed. They are all sick. So we can't come here and gather our food there. They destroyed it, and they want to keep destroying it.

They don't tell you -- they don't tell the public about their evaporation ponds and their leaks and their spray mists. And those blow right into the Cheyenne River.

And you know what? I live in this range where my dad lives right here by Red Shirt by Cheyenne River, and my mom lives in Oglala, and we get exposed to this uranium.

The old pit mine, my dad's house, which I just slept in last night, the radon levels are coming up from the basements. Independent studies -- they are coming up from the basement when it rains, the precipitation. We're already at risk, and this is going to continue.

So what I'm going to say is this: Our Oglala people came here, and you're detaching us

from that. We can't ever come back here.

Here we go, she cut me off. But I want to offer my water to you, and tell you this: That we got this water over here in Hot Springs.

They call it kidney water, and it comes right from this aquifer, Inyan Kara, and this is sought-after water. It's healing water. And this is the same water these guys here want to contaminate and claim.

You know, and we learned a lot from Crow

Butte. They won't clean up their -- out of the

their area of mining site, and neither will you.

REGIONAL JUDICIAL OFFICER SUTIN: Thank you, Ms. Stands.

Judy Schumacher.

JUDY SCHUMACHER: I didn't know my number was going to come up so quick.

I'm Judy Schumacher. I live down in Provo,
South Dakota. I don't agree with this mining.

I don't want it. It's dangerous at best. I
grew up in Buffalo, South Dakota, and back in
the -- I'm going to say late '50s to -- probably
into the late '60s, maybe early '70s, they did
some uranium mining up there.

And they left these little divots in the

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ground where they dug, and these little divots collect water. Well, in dry years, when these little divots do get a little bit of water in them and the cows drink out of them and the sheep drink out of them, they get -- black cows will turn white, sheep lose their wool. They are down to their skin, get sunburned.

My husbands and I lived for quite some time in eastern South Dakota in a little town called Brandon. Well, it's not so little anymore. But anyway, they had a nuclear power plant right on the edge of the Sioux River.

When they turned it on, they turned it off immediately because it melted down. There still are no trees growing there. There is no grass growing there. The river is polluted. There were a lot of people just south of where that power plant was who died from cancer.

My daughter was born there, and we lived there for three years until she was three. When she was 22 years old, she had to have a hysterectomy because she had cancer.

My father-in-law worked in this mill that was over here. He died from pancreatic cancer. Soft tissue cancer is caused by radioactivity.

1 If you get too many X-rays, you will die from 2 soft tissue cancer. 3 Now, who's going to buy this uranium you're wanting to dig up? What's going to happen to 4 5 it? What's going to happen with these sediment 6 ponds when they dry up? Are -- you know, is it 7 still going to be able to rain in them and get 8 all of that uranium active again? 9 What about other people's wastewater, is it 10 going to be allowed to be dumped down the holes? 11 Nobody is answering these questions. Nobody can 12 answer them. It's just -- it's scary. I've seen way too 13 14 much. And yeah, I'm emotional. I have a right 15 to be emotional. Thank you. 16 REGIONAL JUDICIAL OFFICER SUTIN: Thank you, 17 Ms. Schumacher. 18 AUDIENCE MEMBER: We're moms, too. REGIONAL JUDICIAL OFFICER SUTIN: Janie 19 20 Stein. 21 JANIE STEIN: Good afternoon. 22 Nuclear energy is not carbon-free. Remember 23 that these regulations are only as safe as the 24 people that are using the regulations and doing 25 them well and doing them perfectly.

AUDIENCE MEMBER: Amen.

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JANIE STEIN: The science in the 1950s told us that uranium mining, the way they did it then was safe. Let's talk to the Dine people about that.

Let's talk to the original people of the land about justice and environmental justice. Let's see what they have to say about it.

We've been hearing testimony the last few days. I've sure learned a lot. And we've heard from many experts, the facts and figures and statistics about why this is a bad idea to continue this project, the Dewey-Burdock uranium project.

We have just begun to hear about treaty rights, and I've just begun learning about treaty rights and all the issues that are connected with them.

My husband and I are learning about a lot of different connections with all of these issues. And as a matter of fact, all waters are connected, and we are all downstream when it comes right down to it. So this is everybody's issue.

Treaties between nations are the highest

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laws of the land. Treaties are still in place which ensure that the Black Hills are the lands of the Lakota people. They should be consulted, and they are the ones to approve the cultural, archaeological, and religious surveys that take place, and they should have the final say about what goes on here.

When I was at Standing Rock, I saw firsthand the blatant racism and brutality that gave rise to the genocide of the first people of this land. This attitude continues in our country today and is evidenced by this project, which is attempting to force a dangerous and unnecessary threat to our land and water, forcing this upon we, the many people who do not want it. This project will benefit only a few who will profit in money, but risk the loss of their souls. We are all downstream.

To reiterate, this is Lakota land. The
United States government should honor the
treaties with them. This project should not go
forward at all unless and until the old mines
have been cleaned and tribal-approved cultural,
religious, and archaeological surveys take
place, and true, genuine consultation with the

1 tribes happens. 2 For the sake of the land, for the sake of 3 the water, to maintain the integrity of the Environmental Protection Agency, for your own 4 5 and our own personal humanity, for the sake of 6 your children, our children, future generations, 7 I urge you to do everything in your power or 8 influence to shut this project down immediately. 9 And my T-shirt reminds us all today that only we can resist fascist liars. Let's 10 11 remember that in the coming days. 12 Thank you very much. REGIONAL JUDICIAL OFFICER SUTIN: Thank you, 13 Ms. Stein. 14 15 Sylvana Flute. 16 SYLVANA FLUTE: (Speaking in indigenous 17 language.) 18 Good afternoon. I greet all of you with a 19 good heart. I am Sylvana Flute of the Sisseton 20 Wahpeton Oyate from northeast South Dakota. 21 These are my nephews. We are members of the 22 Oceti Sakowin, Seven Council Fires of the 23 Dakota, Lakota, and Nakota Nation. I walk in both worlds as a Dakota with a 24

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drop of a wasichu French blood. I am an

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indigenous person of North America. I am a human being. I am a mother, a grandmother, and a life-giver.

I come to help protect all our future generations. I come to remind you there is no such thing as a safe uranium system. Think or research Fukushima, Japan that continues to leak radiation into our earth's ocean, contaminating and killing living creatures in the ocean, and it's spreading this way.

I also come before you as an endometrial cancer survivor, a very rare cancer, a new cancer that is not hereditary. And I actually had to go to Mayo Clinic for radiation, chemotherapy to kill the cancer. I have to get it cut out every time there is a tumor. And I've had four major surgeries to remove the tumor and any cancer margins.

We must think of our children. We must also protect those who are never given a choice, the wildlife and living creatures in the water.

Uranium causes cancer. When the uranium leaks into the water, you will have no drinkable water here. Cancer rates and death rates will increase.

1 I am against the uranium mining and waste 2 disposal. We all -- we all that come from 3 Sisseton Wahpeton are against it. We come here 4 to support all our people. I want all our 5 children to have a future, to be with your loved 6 ones. And think about what's going on here 7 because our children are our future. And 8 without that water, what future will they have? 9 REGIONAL JUDICIAL OFFICER SUTIN: Thank you, 10 Ms. Flute. 11 Abrey Flute. 12 ABREY FLUTE: (Speaking in indigenous 13 language.) 14 My name is Abrey Flute. My traditional name 15 is Hiha Sila, Owl Boy. And I think out of all 16 the Native Americans here, I'm probably the most 17 colonized maybe. 18 But you know, we had a voice from the future 19 come up here, and it was that young man right 20 there, you know. He showed us that he's 21 fighting for his future in this, you know, 22 county, in this town. 23 You know, he's a warrior, an akicita, in my 24 book. For him to come up here and say the 25

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things he said, you know, it moved me, you know.

And it showed me that, you know, this is a right fight to fight for.

And I would like to also say that I'm pretty sure, you know, you guys aren't bad people, you know. We're all human. We all bleed, and we all, you know, need essential things, like water, food, and certain things.

I'm pretty sure that this is a tough job to come up here and do, but I would like to say that, you know, I answered the call to Standing Rock and stood with my people there. I answered the call here and stood with everybody here.

And I just wanted to say that oil and uranium should not be coming out of the ground. Mother Earth did not ask for this. You know, you can come up with any scientific thing. You can come up here with papers and say, you know, the facts, you know, things that have come up.

But the future is created by those that are searching for the uncertain and that are discovering the unknown. And go ahead and put down, you know, this uranium project, but who's to say that, you know, the people who are willing to govern it and oversee it will be here in 15 years, 20 years when young men like him

1 have to fight for decisions that adults chose 2 for them and that they didn't choose themselves. 3 So, you know, I just want to say, just wanted to say that and hau. 4 5 REGIONAL JUDICIAL OFFICER SUTIN: Thank you. 6 Waniya Locke. 7 WANIYA LOCKE: (Speaking in indigenous 8 language.) 9 I grew up on the Missouri River. I am from 10 Standing Rock. I have been a part of this 11 preliminary hearing, and I sat in some of rounds 12 like this before against NAGRPA. 13 I want to reaffirm that you guys are guests 14 within our home territory. We are Lakota-Dakota 15 people, and we should be able to address you in 16 our own language. So I ask respectfully that 17 you bring a Lakota-Dakota translator when you 18 come to our home. 19 I ask that you stand here with us and have 20 an honest, open ear because there's only 2.5 21 percent drinkable water. 22 I ask again that you have tribally approved 23 archaeologists, tribally approved surveyors, and 24 understand that we are fighting for the future, 25 and we should not be going up against our own

government agencies to protect our future.

I also ask that you take into consideration everything that has been happening within our world. Hanford, Washington, is the same time as during your hearings. That's direct evidence. Crow Butte is direct evidence. This is within our land, our territory, where we, me and my people, have been here for thousands and thousands of years.

And the EPA is supposed to protect the environment. And I don't think it's right that I have to stand up against the EPA granting permits. I feel that you guys should stand with the people. I feel that you should protect the environment and the future that comes with this.

We as adults make these decisions, and I can honestly say I go home every night to my children, and I look at my children and say, I stood up for you today.

I stood up for my daughter who is going to carry my grandchildren. I stood up for her daughter that's not even here yet, as a matriarch, as the backbone.

Respect our sovereignty and recognize us as human beings and understand that we have a say.

1 Even if we did not grow up in Edgemont, this is 2 still our land. 3 (Speaking in indigenous language.) REGIONAL JUDICIAL OFFICER SUTIN: Thank you. 4 5 Martha -- Marta Bates. 6 MARTIN BATES: Not Martha. 7 REGIONAL JUDICIAL OFFICER SUTIN: 8 Martin. I apologize. I'll put my glasses on. MARTIN BATES: You're not the first that's 9 10 called me Martha Bates. Martin Bates is my 11 name. 12 Thanks for having this hearing again and an 13 opportunity for us to be here. And I just want 14 to read this. I went out to the George S. 15 Mickelson Trailhead this morning. I looked 16 around down there for any acknowledgement of the 17 people that were here before, and I didn't see 18 anything on the sign. 19 So I looked online to see if there was 20 anything here, and I found a page that wasn't a 21 state page, it wasn't a South Dakota page. 22 was a user of the trail that apparently built a 23 site. 24 And this person who likes trails, 25 Rails-to-Trails, and he's ridden the trail in

its entirety. My wife and I rode part of it, but we got tired by the time we got to the top of that hill outside of Deadwood a few years ago.

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It said bicycling the length of the George S. Mickelson Trail, it's easy to see why the Black Hills remain sacred land to the Lakota nation. He said Lakota nation, I understand it's really Oceti Sakowin and some others. Consider that. So I wanted to just remind you of that.

I looked all over on the state page. And I actually called the state coordinator, and she called back while I was listening to other testimony, so I will find out what she says about that. But I think at least this state is -- irrelevant to this, but at least the State of South Dakota should acknowledge the people that were here before.

Everything that they have starts with Custer and Wild Bill somebody or other, and that's the history. They act as though that's the beginning of time here, and the railroad, of course, is the beginning.

Well, I can't introduce myself in my

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original tongue. I don't even know the creation story, the creation place that I came from.

Most of my blood is from Scotland area and what used to be called Britain. I think I'm mostly Brit, not sure because I don't have the history.

A couple thousand years ago, Christianity started, and that's what this is here, symbols and icons around here of Christianity. Only 2,000 or so years ago that began. That's an Abrahamic religion. Judaism started about 1,000 years before that possibly, around there. So we really don't have history.

I want to speak a little bit to the folks from Caucasia. I say that lightly, the Caucasians here. I want to say that our -- we don't have that history. Perhaps we're a little jealous of that, that we can't go back and find our original place of origin. The people that testified here can.

And our job now is to, as descendants of these people, is to do whatever we can -- sorry. I feel strongly about things, and this comes up -- to allow us to protect their stories and their history. And that's -- that's why I'm here.

There might be -- somebody told me, a Lakota person actually told me that there might be a good way for -- my wife and I were up at Standing Rock, and we learned a lot. We heard stories of this sort of thing everywhere, I mean everywhere. They are trying to -- I won't talk about those, but everywhere.

We've been traveling through the

Transwestern pipeline, we've ben traveling the

old flat, we've been traveling to the outside of

the -- the edge of the Grand Canyon, where they

are going to take uranium across the mainland

again and again. Put that out there.

So I keep hearing stories, so we went to hear and to see them first place -- firsthand. So we can't do it again. We shouldn't step on the rights of other people who have acquired the land, bought from whoever stole it during those broken treaties. We can't do it. We can't do that that way.

I say -- when I was in the Air Force, we had -- it was that time of the sexual harassment training that we had to do, and I was part of the conducting of it. We had a saying: No means no. If a person -- if a potential sexual

1 partner says "no," it means no. And there's 2 real wisdom about that. 3 And so I say that if the people that hold this land sacred say "no," "no" means no. "No" 4 means no. "No" means no. 5 6 (Audience chanting.) 7 REGIONAL JUDICIAL OFFICER SUTIN: Thank you, 8 Mr. Martin. 9 AUDIENCE MEMBER: Mni Wiconi. 10 REGIONAL JUDICIAL OFFICER SUTIN: Next if we 11 can Rube Tifft. Rube Tifft. Sorry I got that 12 wrong. 13 RUBE TIFFT: I was wondering what this is. 14 Okay. Okay. This is a test hole cap. This is from the '40s and '50s and the '60s. In that 15 16 duration, when they dug a test hole, they dug a 17 foot down, and they set this in the hole, and 18 then they piled some dirt on it. 19 As you can see, this one had a couple little 20 holes poked in it so it wouldn't hold no water, 21 you know, but this was a test hole plug. 22 What I would like to bring to -- I was 23 raised on a ranch east of Sturgis 60 miles, 24 Township 7, Range 13. Well, in -- I was 25 probably 17 when my dad allowed them to dig

three uranium test holes.

Well, the one was out on what we call the hay field, which was 160 acres, and there was a lake bed there that covered at least 40 acres, grew some grass, ducks there. Growing up, I mean, there was set water year-round.

Well, they dug a hole in the corner of it.

Well, the first thing that occurred was the neighbor a mile north, he had a deep well, and he was all pissed off because his water started pumping up that mucky stuff from the test -- the lake bed, and eventually ruined his well. And he passed away bitter at my dad for allowing it to happen.

Well, as the years went by, that 40 acres, which there was an ancient Indian campground, teepee rings, and it was known as an area where they used to camp, because that water always drifted, and it filled the dam, irrigation.

It went dry, turned into white soil, prairie dogs took over, the dam started going dry. I started digging dugouts to water the cows. The grass didn't put up the hay.

Our house well was 30-foot deep. One of the nicest wells you'd ever drink water out of. It

started going -- getting lower and lower, so I dug one 40 feet deep, but that didn't help much because it was shallow water and, well, eventually Bud Wenzel, which his actual name was Walter Wenzel, he -- he passed away. The family sold their place because they had no water on it.

A few years later, Oscar Davidson, he was 5 miles east of where they dug that test hole, and he was pumping up mucky water. Well, it just drained that whole lake bed aquifer right down into the deep water.

And well, you know, it wouldn't run the amount of livestock that it ran when I was a kid, and by '95, I give up my dream. Quit. And I didn't have a big enough place to go on, and the little place wasn't producing.

What scares me is these test holes sit open. They are not filled. If they were filled, it would be different. You start pressurizing it up, water raises, down it goes into the deep water, or maybe it comes up into the shallow water. But you're going to have a problem.

Water courses are changed all the time.

Homestake changed a lot of water courses

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over the years. You talk to people that mined in there, well, water courses are changed. It might come up; it might go down. But it's going to affect things.

In this area, you've got alkali, which is a form of Epsom salts, selenium. And you got layers. You go along the Cheyenne River, you'll find 6-feet layers of pure -- pure stuff. Well, you dig through that and water caves down in, pretty soon water -- water gets contaminated with that stuff.

And these open test holes are an issue. I mean, the one that caved in, why, you could have dumped a car in there before I left. That's in the top. I mean, they went through a 60-foot base in the ground that was full of water. So down it went.

Well, all I'm saying is, all these open test holes, I wrote President Trump a letter, and I says, I bet you in ten years, if they do it, I'll bet you a dollar that you can't drink Hot Springs water. So I guess that's my testimony. Thank you.

REGIONAL JUDICIAL OFFICER SUTIN: Thank you, $\operatorname{Mr.}$ Tifft.

Edward Starr.

EDWARD STARR: (Speaking in indigenous language.)

I welcome everybody here that's here for the EPA hearing. My name is Edward Starr. I live in Oglala, and my grandfather has been here for ages and ages. My grandfather, in that time they had no need for any kind of money. Then 500 years ago, three boats came, and they brought some people.

Along with that, they brought Christians, and what followed them Christians was a person, an anti-Christ. You know what an anti-Christ is. They are the ones that killed a man named Jesus Christ.

Now that -- and they -- and they brought the power of the money, the anti-Christ, called it capitalism.

I have a dollar bill that I wanted to show you something. We all know, we all seen the pyramid with the eye on top. That eye represents anti-Christ, anti-Christ. And there's 13 layers of rocks here. And those represent the 13 Satanic families. And we've got 13 stripes sitting up here.

And if you look on the other side, it's a military emblem. I was in the Army. My cap, first class cap, I had a gold emblem on my head. But on the right side of it, he's holding 13 arrows. On the other side is an olive branch with 13 olives on it. And there's a shield right in here, it's got 13 stripes.

And right above the head, there's a group of stars. There's 13 of them. And the tail feathers, there's 13 of them. That's what you call capitalism. It has occupied the whole Northern Hemisphere.

I went to boarding school, and they told me
I was going to be an intelligent, civilized
citizen. But I resisted all the way through.
ran away several times from school because I
grew up traditionally. I preferred to stay in
my -- in that way.

But I realize today we are in a spiritual war that started 500 years ago for us. Our Lakota, Dakota, Nakota people and all the Native Americans on Turtle Island that we are standing on are in a spiritual war.

When that anti-Christ, this God's eye came, he came with the money. And if you look on

that -- they say he has a number 666 on his head. So if you look at this, all of these, anything you buy has that, the mark of the beast on it.

Because if you look at a bar code, the first -- there's two long lines in the middle, but there's two more long lines, and at the end there is another long line. And if you take accounting Cobalt, you know that those are sixes.

And so someday they are going to put those codes on our skin. And there are 800 FEMA camps that are across the nation, and the one for South Dakota is right here, FEMA camp. And they are building a -- equipping it with coffins that can hold up to five bodies.

So if you refuse this mark under your skin, you're going to be sent here, and you're going to die here. And that's coming soon. So I just wanted to say that.

I worked in Igloo, South Dakota back in '75.

And I got -- I don't know if that's where I got cancer or if it's from the Slim Buttes area.

There was 37 holes, test holes there. And they say capping is not -- just this cover right

here, that's not capping.

Capping is between layers, like that picture you had up here. They force cement between the water and this other sediment, uranium, and that's capping. That's what needs to happen.

If that doesn't work, that doesn't work, what happened, the radon, radium will come up.

And it happened in the reservation. At that

18--- oh, 1981. We had a sudden death of -
SIDS, a lot of babies were dying. The doctors

at Pine Ridge Hospital said those are something in the air.

REGIONAL JUDICIAL OFFICER SUTIN: Mr. Starr, your time is up, so I need you to wrap up, please.

EDWARD STARR: Okay.

But the officials heard about it, heard the doctors' statements, and they fired all of them. They transferred them out.

But uranium isn't safe, never was and it never will be. We have sacred sites all over here, and all our relatives and ancestors, they are buried all over the Black Hills. And we don't want what happened in Japan, contaminating the whole Pacific ocean now, and we don't want

1 that to happen here. 2 (Speaking in indigenous language.) 3 REGIONAL JUDICIAL OFFICER SUTIN: Thank you, Mr. Starr. 4 5 Charles Kelsey. 6 CHARLES KELSEY: As she said, my name is 7 Charles Kelsey. I live east of Edgemont. I 8 have a small horse training ranch there, and I 9 live near the Cheyenne River. I like to fish 10 there. I eat the fish from the Cheyenne River. 11 I am retired. I retired after 35 years of doing radiation 12 protection. I've worked in several countries 13 and have worked in several states in the U.S. 14 15 doing radiation protection. In other words, 16 protecting people from radiation. I've done that for 35 years. So I know a lot about it. 17 18 I've had a lot of experiences with it. I've 19 had experiences where there have been problems, 20 where technical failures, where there had been 21 human errors, and we've had to deal with some 22 problems. But we have, over time, dealt with 23 those problems. And as I say, learned a lot about protecting 24

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people from radiation. I've worked in several

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industries over the years, including the ISR industry to protect people from radiation.

I've worked -- in that time, I've worked with many regulators, such as these. I've worked with professionals that have worked in all these industries, and I have -- as I say, I've seen a lot of examples of a lot of things over time.

The one -- I have learned a few things about radiation that are not obvious to a lot of people. One thing I've learned is that no matter where I go in this world, and I turn on a radiation detector, the radiation clicks, it -- or, the detector clicks. Doesn't matter where I am. That means there is radiation everywhere all the time. There always has been and there always will be.

I've also learned that no matter where I am, if I take a sample and have it studied, there's uranium. It doesn't matter where I am, it's always there. And it always has been, so it's just a fact of life.

I've also learned that if you look around yourselves, start counting off, that if we're typical of people in this country, you can --

1 you can bet that one in five of us, no matter 2 where we live in this country, we're going to 3 die of cancer. So when you hear of this person or that 4 5 person or the other person dying of cancer, 6 that's just the way it is in this country. One 7 in five people die of cancer. 8 AUDIENCE MEMBER: We never had cancer. 9 CHARLES KELSEY: Whatever the causes. 10 AUDIENCE MEMBER: We never did. 11 REGIONAL JUDICIAL OFFICER SUTIN: Please 12 don't interrupt. 13 CHARLES KELSEY: Those are just a few things 14 that I've learned in my experience in radiation 15 protection. 16 As I say, I'm retired, and my interest in 17 this community continues to be protecting people 18 from radiation. So I'm here to answer 19 questions, to work with people, to help with the 20 understanding of radiation. 21 And I am here to try to help ensure that 22 this operation, if it goes on, will be done with 23 the concern for people and to protect people from radiation. 24 25 The one additional thing that I have learned

in working with professionals like these is that they really are looking out after our best interest. And I truly believe that whatever their decision is, that that decision will be for our best interest. And I have learned that through 35 years of working with professionals like this. So I'm willing to take their decision and

So I'm willing to take their decision and live with it and try to help people around here live with it the best that they can. That's all I have.

REGIONAL JUDICIAL OFFICER SUTIN: Thank you very much, Mr. Kelsey.

AUDIENCE MEMBER: Not in my area. Not in my area.

REGIONAL JUDICIAL OFFICER SUTIN: Excuse me. Excuse me. Please, excuse me. If you are going to make those sorts of comments when people are speaking, I'll have to ask you to leave. This is an area where everyone needs to feel comfortable speaking.

Next if we can have Kathleen Bailey.

KATHLEEN BAILEY: I have to make a disclaimer. I'm from out of state, but no one shipped me here. I drove up in a 1994 Toyota

Corolla with my dog, and I'm staying at a campsite. I just got in on Monday so I could be at all of these. I'm here from -- so I can be at all these meetings.

AUDIENCE MEMBER: Use the mic.

KATHLEEN BAILEY: I didn't want them to take my time by doing that. I'm here from my passion and heart. No one shipped me here. You wouldn't hear me anyway if I was at the mic.

I don't have the eloquence or the knowledge of the majority of the people that spoke today, so I'll be repeating what I've said in the last -- in the meetings, all the meetings I've attended.

I, Kathleen F. Bailey from Englewood,

Colorado, stand here before you again to repeat
loudly and clearly that I oppose the proposed
aquifer exemption decision for the Dewey-Burdock
uranium in-situ recovery site located near

Edgemont, South Dakota under the authority of
the Safe Drinking Water Act and UIC program
regulations in connection with the Class III
area permit to exempt the uranium-bearing
portions of the Inyan Kara Groom aquifers.

The EPA has proven itself to have devolved

into nothing more than a taxpayer \$8 billion dollar agency dedicated to supporting and promoting exemptions for the very industries that continue to cause massive environmental contamination, the legacy of which is left to the local residents for generations.

At issue, the portions of the Inyan Kara aquifer the EPA proposes to exempt have historically been used as a source of drinking water, are currently used as a source of drinking water, and can be a future source of drinking water.

EPA's current Title 40 146.4 declares, "The proposed aquifer exemption area must not be a current or future source of drinking water using the criteria at 40 CFR 146.4."

With this specific aquifer exemption approval, they will set a precedent eliminating that second part of protecting the future -- exempt an aquifer that could be used as a future source of water. They will set a precedent to eliminate that because they have not included it with this exemption proposal.

And the evidence of the convoluted joint efforts between EPA and Azarga/Powertech to meet

the only consideration they want to continue under their own 40 146.4. The current source of drinking water was recorded in 11- -- on the November 17, 2016 memorandum by Valois Shea, EPA and Powertech worked cooperatively to manipulate the status as "no current use" from the targeted portions of an Inyan Kara group in order to eliminate the current use protection.

Per the 11/17/16 EPA memorandum, currently there are multiple wells drawing from the targeted portions of the Inyan Kara group aquifers that were historically and currently used for both human and livestock consumption.

Many of these residences are currently abandoned, and therefore the EPA and Azarga/Powertech can say they are not currently using the water. But at least one of the residents continues to uses the well water, Well 16, from the targeted portion of the aquifer.

To create -- to create a "no current use" status from which the EPA and Azarga/Powertech are trying to base this aquifer exemption proposal, Powertech promised to permanently provide the resident with bottled water for drinking if they agreed to let Powertech severe

and seal off the waterline from their well to their home.

The resident agreed, and the waterline from the well to the home was severed and sealed. However, Well 16 continued to be used for the resident's livestock, which under South Dakota law is still considered the same as a well -- as well water used for human consumption, a fact that the EPA at that time was willing to also ignore.

This was sufficient back in November 2016 for the EPA to conclude. Based on CZA calculations, the EPA has concluded that the portions of the Inyan Kara aquifers proposed for exemption do not currently serve as a source of drinking water.

Per Valois Shea in one of the last meetings, she informed me that since that November 16 -November 17, 2016 memorandum, they corrected themselves, and on March 6, 2017, to get around the Well 16 issue, they simply removed two wellfields within all of the wellfields that they were going to be drilling from -- from out of drilling target because they determined that those particular two wellfields are what fed

that Well 16. And yet, they're in the middle of all the well -- in-situ welling that's going to go on and will contaminate the entire area.

I publicly denounce this current effort by the EPA, and I demand the EPA follow its own laws and environmental protection mandate and not approve this Inyan Kara aquifer group for exemption because, in fact, this Inyan Kara aquifer group is indeed a current and future source of drinking water that requires and mandates protection.

I wish to state two additional alarming facts. What the EPA also won't tell you is that uranium in-situ recovery mining has consistently resulted in contamination. And per the U.S. Geological Survey, to date there has been no successful mitigation of the contamination resulting from uranium in-situ recovery mining. So the current status as a drinking water source and a future drinking water source will be permanently lost if this is approved.

What the EPA has also not disclosed is that the Nuclear Regulatory Commission has approved that the Class III underground injection disposal wells approved for the uranium mining

1 wastewater disposal will also be made available 2 for injection disposal for other radioactive 3 waste fluids from other sources, such as municipal water treatment plants, well past when 4 5 the mining activities stop, which will be an 6 ongoing continuous source of income for 7 Azarga/Powertech. REGIONAL JUDICIAL OFFICER SUTIN: 8 9 Ms. Bailey, your five minutes is up. 10 KATHLEEN BAILEY: And I'm done. Thank you. 11 REGIONAL JUDICIAL OFFICER SUTIN: Thank you 12 very much. 13 Isaiah Cox. 14 ISAIAH COX: I'm Isaiah Cox, and I didn't 15 think I'd be back here so soon. But anyway, 16 well -- I will -- for one, I want to, like, tell 17 everyone here to sign up to speak. You know, 18 even if you don't really have that much to say, 19 you should still sign up or write a comment. 20 There's a comment box over there. 21 But anyway, so you want to, like, mine 22 this -- mine it -- or mine the uranium. Sorry

this -- mine it -- or mine the uranium. Sorry if I sound weird. But anyway, if one person who lives there, if they don't want it, I don't think you should do it just because of that one

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person, mainly because it's their -- they live
there, too.

It's not just, like -- everyone is -- like.

It's not just, like -- everyone is -- like, everyone's voice should matter, sort of. That one person, that should kind of change it to where it -- you at least take that into consideration, if you're not. And it's not even our land. Well, it's not our land first, you know.

So the people who had this land before we came, they aren't -- they don't want this, you know. So why are you trying to take this away from them?

Thank you. And that is all.

REGIONAL JUDICIAL OFFICER SUTIN: Thank you.

Mark Brown.

MARK BROWN: Good afternoon. I'm Mark
Brown. I grew up in Edgemont. I recently got a
nuclear engineering degree, and I happen to be
in town for this thing.

So I don't really understand the opposition to the water. You say you're going to poison the water, but uranium is already in the ground, it's already poisoning the water. Why do you think there's radon in the basements? The alpha

decay there -- uranium decays, and then it decays into radon, and then it ultimately decays and gives you cancer.

Why wouldn't it make more sense to get rid of the uranium in the water already? You're cleaning the water. It does not make any sense to -- to do it. And it works. It works in Uzbekistan. It works in Kazakhstan. It works in Australia. It works in Wyoming. It works around the world. It's a tested, tested method of uranium -- removing uranium, so I don't understand.

You say you don't poison the water. I lived in Flint, Michigan. I have seen water being poisoned. This is not it. This is cleaning the water. You say it's like Fukushima or like Chernobyl. I was in Chernobyl eight months ago. It is nothing like that. Nothing at all. I do not understand the opposition to this. It doesn't make sense to me.

Thank you.

REGIONAL JUDICIAL OFFICER SUTIN: Thank you, Mr. Brown.

So at this time, those are all of the folks that have signed up to speak. Is there anyone

1 else who would like to speak that has not? 2 Oh, excuse me. We have more cards. I 3 apologize. Our next speaker, Will Leigh. 4 5 WILL LEIGH: (Speaking in indigenous 6 language.) 7 Hello, everybody. My name is Will Leigh, 8 and I'd like to read a letter from my Oyape. 9 We all use worldwide resources that our 10 earth has provided for her two-legged children 11 for centuries. Out of her love for us, we are still here today. It is out of that love and 12 13 nature that I pray for your spirit to not become 14 stagnant, which has occurred over time of 15 ignoring history, our history. 16 We should utilize our past to stop burning 17 ourselves in the same fire, this representing 18 the choices we make to destroy our Grandmother 19 Earth, expecting different results to make what 20 was once created perfect for us a supposedly 21 better place. 22 For our brothers and sisters that have been 23 led astray from their bond with Grandmother 24 Earth by greed, let them be made aware of --25 that that is a huge hunger that shall never be

fulfilled. The emotion your spirit yearns for is the connection every child should have with their mother.

The biggest bandwagon to self-destruction is greed, a conception that the more currency you have will fill the emptiness that only Mother Earth can make whole. Let your spiritual roots grow. Spiritual connection with Grandmother Earth is true happiness, and we will not allow this to happen to our communities any longer.

Do not mistake our kindness as indigenous people as a weakness among a misunderstood nation. We will not be easily pushed aside time after time. I stand before you today not only for the people standing along beside me, but for your children, for what you have sold out for.

Through my -- though my humble spirit instilled in me through my connection with the earth, I pray persistently for every one among us that we may remove the veil from our spiritual consciousness and that Grandmother Earth forgive our naive curiosity derived from the discerning spread of greed.

The ways of our ancestors to forage consistently without depleting our precious

1 resources are either chosen to be forgotten or 2 stomped out. What is happening now here with 3 the mine is just one of the many events of a bigger picture that will be another little 4 5 expression of cause and effects. 6 We will soon no longer exist if we do 7 nothing. If we fail to compromise, the entity 8 that plagues our lands with chaos will spread. 9 Where are the men hiding, in their planning 10 They send out others, others that are 11 programmed with paper printed, and the faces of 12 people that are derived from all people. 13 that is afflicted by any decision that is made 14 by the government for mankind. 15 That's from my Oyape. 16 (Speaking in indigenous language.) 17 REGIONAL JUDICIAL OFFICER SUTIN: Thank you, 18 Mr. Leigh. 19 Andrew Blanchflower. 20 ANDREW BLANCHFLOWER: Hello, everyone. Thanks for the indigenous people of this place 21 22 for patience here and continued welcome and 23 support that I feel here. 24 Mostly that's why I'm here, is to stand in 25 support of that. I saw you guys in Valentine,

and kind of good to see familiar faces. You guys, like, must really know each other by now.

But I notice that you guys are getting paid, and we're not. Like, I'm not getting paid, but you're getting paid.

So I'm -- so I'm questioning, like, people, like, why oppose it? But I'm kind of, like, why do -- I don't know why anyone is strongly supporting this. I don't know how it benefits anyone. The best is we get all these people to come up from the industry. They are all from the industry. Some way or another, they are all or have been or are getting paid to be here.

I don't know where all the guys in cowboy hats went, but they were all kind of sneering and stuff like that. But I don't know. It kind of becomes this partly political thing rather than what is the right thing to do here as human-being people.

Like this false dichotomy between science and emotion. Like science -- if you look at the word "science," it says the observation of the natural world. We are the natural world.

That's what science is. So science has been co-opted and trampled into representing

corporate interests. So what I'm seeing here is corporate interest.

I know, EPA, whatever you want to call yourself, you are probably really good people.

You have children, families, homes and that to go to. You're not really the people to rant at.

We can never get close to those people.

But you can tell your people that there is resistance to this, and there is going to continue to be resistance to not just this, but the corporate -- corporate corpse that is taking away life from all of us. It's sucking life out of us.

The relative that spoke about money, the system is of control. Money is the system of control. You know, would you be here if you weren't getting paid? Question your life if that is the case.

If that is the case that you would not be here, you are now enslaved. You are doing something against your will. As you write all this down, as you write all this down, stir up -- do a really good job.

So mostly, I just want to say that, really.

I don't know why to be strongly for getting

uranium out of the ground other than to give profit to a corporation, the corporation of the United States, the corporation of whatever it's called, Azarga or whatever it's called.

So yeah, the best -- the best I can hear is it's not that bad for you from the people from the industry. Oh, uranium, it's not that bad for you. You know, we're -- you're going to die of cancer. The water is contaminated anyway.

It's like -- so I don't know why that is enough for this project to continue. I don't know why the premise is that the people who aren't getting paid have to come here and say stop. I don't know why it isn't the other way around. I don't know why the corporation isn't coming to the people and asking, is it -- does this make any sense? Can we do this?

So maybe -- maybe -- I was at Standing Rock.

I'm English. This is a global issue. There are some local people here. I want to respect local settlers who own title to land. You don't own land. We all know you don't own land.

But these -- it's a global issue. It's a local issue. It's uranium. It's not a local -- uranium isn't local. It affects the whole

world.

I'm English, and I -- my children, my wife are American. We currently live with the -- on the Sicangu Rosebud over there. That's where we're residing at the moment. But -- yeah, mostly I just wanted to say that.

In which reality would we prefer to live in, one where people come out of the goodness of their heart or one where there are paid. People paid -- obviously paid by corporations to sneer and deride people for having an emotional response to something that is actually quite an emotional issue.

So yeah, just mostly that. There will be resistance. There is resistance. Expect that. And we'll see what happens, I guess. If you -- if you, your bosses, the people who pay you and enslave you decide to go ahead and grant the permits. So I request that you don't grant the permits.

Maybe I will request that you grant them so that we can, like, get on with this and get rid of the corporations and -- no. Formally, I'm requesting that you do not grant the permits.

And that they better watch out, seriously.

1 All right. Thank you.

REGIONAL JUDICIAL OFFICER SUTIN: Thank you.

Robert White Mountain.

ROBERT WHITE MOUNTAIN: Good afternoon. I was going to introduce myself in my language, but I think it's -- I will skip that because it takes too long. I want to save my time so I can talk. Last time I got cut off.

My name is Robert White Mountain. I'm

Hunkpapa Lakota from Standing Rock. And I'm

just here trying to understand both sides

because I was taught that. I'm a fair person,

so I have to look at both sides. And I have.

You know, I've not an expert in all this, but I've been working on this for quite a while. My first experience with this was 36 years ago right up here, right up the road where they were trying to destroy some very sacred sites that our people have.

And that's really important, not only for our people, because it also is important for everybody, to protect these sacred sites, because it explains life as we know it here on earth. And if we destroy these, you know, it's like we are -- you know, we're lost.

You know, our Lakota people and our indigenous people, we have records that go back millions of years. Millions. Not thousands, not hundreds, billions. We understand this land for billions and billions of years since we were put here, since we came here. So it's not something that we are not familiar with.

We are -- we've been here, we always will be, and that's just the way it is. And now we see that, you know, since the last 500 years, our guests have come over here.

You know, I think there's a lot of disrespect from our guests. Because you would think you would come over here and you own this land, but you don't. Because if you really look at it, the government has been in a position where nobody ever owns the land. As long as you keep paying your taxes, you can live on it.

But you never will own it because it's under a parliamentary system. So then we go back to all that. Anyway, that's a long story. So basically, nobody will ever own this land because of the way it's set up.

So if you say, I have these 140 acres. If you don't pay the taxes on that 140 acres, it's

not yours. It goes to the next guy. That's just the way it is.

So we all have to live here. I look at all of this, you know. It was -- I look at this town, you know. I was driving around this town, and I heard a gentleman say there was uranium mining here for 29 years. And, you know, I was like, Okay. I look around, you know. Mining towns, they're usually -- you know, when there's a mining town, it grows.

I mean, a town will grow and grow and grow until finally it busts. The mine will close down, and slowly it dies out. That's just the record of everything -- all over, all over, all over the land here.

You know, so -- you know, it's like you had 29 years of mining here, but this town is so tiny. There's nothing here. Why -- where is the growth? So where is the -- where is the lucrative point in mining?

So then you think back through the basics of human beings, who are we? We are all human beings. I'm a Hunkpapa Lakota, but I'm still the same as you. I still have the same red -- same blood. I still have lungs and a heart and

everything else as you. I'm no different.

But I look out for my kids. I look out.

I'm a father, I'm a grandfather, I'm a

great-grandfather. I have great-grandkids.

I look out for these kids because I also -you know, I don't really care for what happened
in the last 500 years. But it's the relatives
that -- you guys are all here. And you guys
aren't going to go. You should go home, but you
ain't going. So we've got to leave here, you
know. We have to live together.

But we can't live together if we're poisoning each other. No matter how safe science says it is, there is no proof of how to fix this, clean this water up. No proof. No track record at all.

And we're still going to take this risk for our kids, the kids standing in the back? You're going to have kids, you know. Why take the risk when you have so many alternative energies?

I heard one gentleman say, you cut down wind because it kills birds. Well, that's been fixed, too. They made them bigger and slower so they don't kill birds. You know, solar, well, it's got so cheap everybody can afford solar.

There's so much power in the sun that will power everything for 36-, 40,000 years. Okay. You got those two things down. You can find out about those.

What about magnetic? We have -- we have,
you know -- we have a gravity pull that's so
much magnetic power in this earth that's
untapped. And it's very safe. All these other,
the geothermal, all these different kinds of
alternative energies that we have at our
disposal that Mother Earth has created that's
brought for us to live, to enjoy. We don't need
to go underneath the ground.

You know, I look at the Bible, and I see this thing called the forbidden fruit. And it says that Adam went over there, and he grabbed that fruit, and he ate it. It could be anything. To me, the forbidden fruit is what's underneath the ground.

REGIONAL JUDICIAL OFFICER SUTIN: Mr. White Mountain, your time is up.

ROBERT WHITE MOUNTAIN: You can't touch it.

It's all good. I knew you'd cut me off.

So the forbidden fruit is what we have

underneath the ground.

1 There's two worlds here. We have the 2 underworld and we have the above world. We have 3 two worlds that we live in. We live in both. Maybe some of you guys don't know how you 4 5 live in both, but we do. But we do. And so we 6 have to protect that underneath as much as we 7 can because it's going to affect above, too. 8 Thank you. 9 REGIONAL JUDICIAL OFFICER SUTIN: Thank you, 10 Mr. White Mountain. It is a little after 5:00, so we will be 11 breaking until 6:00. We'll return then and take 12 13 more testimony. Thank you. 14 We'll go off the record at this point. (A recess was taken from 15 16 5:03 p.m. to 6:05 p.m.) REGIONAL JUDICIAL OFFICER SUTIN: Good 17 18 evening, everyone. We're going to get started, 19 so if you want to take your seats. My name is 20 Elyana Sutin, and I'm the Regional Judicial 21 Officer for the Environmental Protection Agency 22 in Denver, Colorado. 23 We're not going to go through the formal remarks this evening. I think most folks who 24 25 were here this afternoon heard the remarks.

I will just walk through briefly what the process is for speaking this evening so that if you were not here and are interested in providing testimony, you know what we're doing.

So I will just read briefly what we're here for. On March 6, 2017, EPA issued two draft Underground Injection Control, or UIC, area permits to Powertech USA, Inc. for injection activities related to uranium recovery near Edgemont, South Dakota.

The draft permits include a UIC Class III area permit for injection wells for the in-situ recovery of uranium, and a UIC Class V area permit for deep injection wells for disposal of treated in-situ recovery process waste fluids.

The EPA is also proposing an aquifer exemption approval in connection with the draft UIC Class III area permit.

We are here today to listen to your comments on these area permits and aquifer exemption. We will take testimony from 6:00 to 8:00 p.m. I will call speakers to the microphone who have filled out a card at the registration table. When it is your turn to speak, please state your name before you begin your testimony.

We will allow people five minutes to speak.

After four minutes, you, will see a yellow

triangle that shows you have one minute left,

and then at five minutes the red stop sign will

go up, and I will let you know that you need to

complete your testimony.

We ask that you be succinct and stay on point. If I find that the testimony is straying from the topic at hand, I will ask you to return to the issue before us.

If we have time, if everyone has had the opportunity to speak who has not spoken, you are able to come back up and finish your testimony if you had more to say.

After finishing your testimony, members of the panel may ask clarifying questions, but we are not here to explain the proposal nor are we here to answer questions during the hearing. We are recording the hearing tonight, so be assured your comments will be considered.

The court reporter sitting to my left will be preparing a transcript of the proceeding and it will be available to anyone who wants to see it.

The transcript is part of the record, and it

will be included in the docket for this matter. The docket is all of the collected materials EPA has used to consider its action, including public comments. The docket is available on the internet for your review or you can see a hard copy at EPA's Denver office.

If you have written copies of your testimony, please give a copy to our staff. You can provide it to me or at the registration table. That will be helpful in preparing the transcript. If you have other written comments or documentation that you would like to provide, you can also leave that with us and we will make sure that it gets in to the docket.

You can -- after tonight, you can submit written comments. The comment period will go for another week until May 19th, so you -- we encourage and you are welcome to submit written comments after these hearings are over.

Once the final permits are issued and the aquifer exemption determination has been made, anyone who participated in these hearings, either through oral testimony or written comments, has the write to appeal the Agency's final decision to the Environmental Appeals

Board.

So with that, we will get started with testimony. First speaker, Linda Tidball.

LINDA TIDBALL: My name is Linda Tidball, and I have taught here in the Edgemont school system for 25 years now.

I moved to the Dewey area when I was five months old, and so I grew up in Dewey on a ranch, and I'm actually the fifth generation of rancher. And I would consider my relatives to be good stewards of the land. Ranchers are not very successful if they don't have water and do not take good care of the land.

I totally support this project. I have been to numerous presentations on how it works. I listened to engineers and people who are educated in this deal, and trust that they, too, know the science and would not want to contaminate our water.

There was some misconception that all of us standing back there were paid by the corporation. I think there were two people here that are paid by corporations. So the rest of us were totally community members volunteering.

I also enjoy natural resources. I didn't

see any horses or bicycles out there today. So I'm assuming everyone used oil products to get here. I do that, too. And I'm so glad that technology has brought us as far as it has so that we are able to use natural resources.

And I know previously some of the uranium mining had spills and mishaps and it wasn't as safe as it is. But many, many things in our lives are different because of advanced technology and education.

And I was fortunate to go to the School of Mines on Monday for the math contest. I got to take a group of our wonderful kids from our area, and it was interesting visiting with math and science teachers.

And they were questioning why, why would people be opposed to that. In-situ is one of the safest mining processes there are. And I was sitting with engineers who have been educated on this process.

And so I am in total favor. I've lived here, with the exception of the time I went off to college. I wanted to come back and raise my kids here, my grandkids. So I want it on the record that I totally support this project.

1 REGIONAL JUDICIAL OFFICER SUTIN: Thank you, 2 Ms. Tidball. 3 Mary Helen Pederson. MARY HELEN PEDERSON: My name is Mary Helen 4 5 Pederson. I do not live in Edgemont anymore, 6 but 61 years ago I came over here from the 7 Rosebud to go to school at the high school here. 8 I lasted one semester. 9 Because when I come over here, I thought, I 10 got to wondering, What in the world is going on 11 here? What's wrong with this sky? It's not clear. It's -- it's -- I don't know. 12 13 And then I found out that there was uranium 14 all around here. 15 So I spent my lifetime checking out 16 on scientists and stuff that have studied 17 uranium, and I found out that one of the biggest 18 uses for uranium was to have -- to make bombs 19 and stuff with it, and what devastation they 20 could -- they could prove. 21 A person -- innocent people couldn't even 22 have a chance for life. They would be killed. 23 Actually, they would be melted in just a few 24 seconds. We proved that with the Japanese

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people. I don't think we're any stronger than

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they are.

And then they had all this uranium. They didn't quite know what to do with it. So they thought they should put it to good use. They come out with all kinds of advertisements, if you used uranium on your skin, your skin will just glow, and you will be beautiful. And people bought that.

And there's movies out about it. There's -like the movie about the girls that had to paint
the illuminous dials on watches and what
happened to them. There's all kinds of
scientists out there that prove what uranium
will do for you.

True, like some of the people talked about, there's uranium, you know, all over the world.

But as long as Mother Earth has taken care of it and it's down underneath, she knows how to take care of it.

It's only when we have greedy people that come along and want to dig it up and do all these wonderful things with it and try to convince all of us that this is the best thing that ever happened to us in the world, then Mother Earth gets a little mad and things kind

of go off and, mistakes happen and leaks happen.

And the people around here that are listening to these engineers out of the engineering, mining college up there in South Dakota, they evidently didn't go to really check out the scientific information on uranium. Because there's all kinds of websites out there that you can go to and learn everything you want to know.

There's pictures of what uranium does to you. There's -- I have a friend right here, didn't happen in Edgemont, but she's got 90 percent uranium in her body. She is going to die from it, from uranium. You know, call it cancer. You can call it all kinds of fancy names that the doctors have made up for all this stuff that goes wrong with the person.

But she has been contaminated with uranium to 97 percent, and I know she's going to talk later so she can talk more about that.

I took home -- yesterday I went to

Hot Springs. I took home all of your wonderful,
wonderful pamphlets there. I can pick every one
of them apart. Like the Class III area permit
does not allow the Inyan Kara aquifer outside

the aquifer exemption boundary to be impacted by
any contaminates resulting from uranium
recovery.

How are you going to guarantee that? Are

How are you going to guarantee that? Are you going to put your life on it? No. You don't live here. You're only paid to come here and tell us what you can do. You are the Environmental Protection Agency. Do your job.

That's what you are set up to do is protect all of us from the corporations coming in here, raping us.

I could go on about the Superfund that Mark
Hollenbeck wouldn't let on the land so they
could declare it a Superfund. You've seen
pictures of those things. I know some have been
sent to you, those big dumps out there. And
that's where they want to start up again.

We had a big rain here in 2013, I believe it was, or '14, that they got nine inches of rain over there by Dewey-Burdock. What does it do?

It fills up those holding ponds.

REGIONAL JUDICIAL OFFICER SUTIN:

Ms. Pederson, your time --

MARY HELEN PEDERSON: Well, I'm done. I can go on and on on your literature alone. That's

1 lies. REGIONAL JUDICIAL OFFICER SUTIN: Thank you, 2 3 Ms. Pederson. Sarah Peterson. 4 5 SARAH PETERSON: My name is Sarah Peterson, 6 and I'm going to finish how Mary Helen started 7 before I go back to what I was going to say. 8 Yes, there was a Superfund application for 9 the Diamond Mine at Dewey-Burdock. And two 10 people from the EPA, I'm not sure who they were, 11 came up and were thrown off the land. 12 13

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They could not do the investigative work to determine whether the Superfund cleanup was needed.

They came back the next summer -- and I don't understand how this works -- they got thrown off again. This is the federal -- you're a federal agency. And you have the federal court behind you. Why didn't you come out with the court order to get back on the land to protect us and clean up the mess that was left?

You know, I -- I just think of the IRS. they knocked on my door, I couldn't say, Get out of here. I would be put in jail and everything taken away from me. I don't get this.

I will start where I was going to start now. Going back. It was in 2013, the first hearing for the South -- the DENR, the South Dakota Water Board was held on this issue. The Atlas storm blizzard, the 150-year blizzard came and people barely got -- most people didn't make it. But the judges were all there, and I --

Somebody's testimony was talking about the rancher that had their water disconnected. I think I know who that was because he was out in the hallway with Powertech signing the papers right before he came in and commented. And he said, Oh, yeah they are taking care of me. Oh, they are giving me such a good deal. They're going to bring me clean water.

And I also heard the young man who is the nuclear scientist, the young nuclear scientist that grew up here. He said this actually cleans the water. Well, I was at another hearing, a hearing down in Crow Butte, and they were talking about restoring -- by the way, Crow Butte operated for at least five years without a permit because it had expired, and it took the NRC -- they continued to operate it and it took the NRC five years to get the hearing together

to issue another permit.

I don't know, I was listening to all five days of the testimony and the judges were asking them about the water in this one aquifer that was going to be cleaned up as soon as they were done.

They talked about working on it and working on it and they -- they said, We've done the best we can. So they asked the NRC for an exemption to that aquifer. That's all they have to do.

It's messed up. Well, then we'll just exempt it from the Clean Water Act. And this is what I'm hearing. I can see this is what's going to happen here, too.

Mary Helen was talking about, this water will not go past a certain point, the contaminates. How can you do that? How can you do that? The EPA says after in-sitsu leach mining, the water can never be restored to baseline. Never. That's what your Agency says.

And I have been to hearings, the NRC hearings for this, and I'm scared because I see what happens when -- there was a leak, this safe in-situ leach process with all the detection wells, there are 125 million gallons of -- of

the toxic waste down at Crow Butte that leaked, and none of their detection wells got it. And it leaked. There was a pin hole in one of their pipes. It leaked for years.

And this is what happens. And that kind of stuff just never is brought out. It's always exempted. They are called excursions because the companies -- the EPA does come up here to check things.

When Mark Hollenbeck was a representative here, House Bill 154 took away the rights of the State to regulate and do the water and gave it to you. And you can't even get on the project area.

REGIONAL JUDICIAL OFFICER SUTIN: Your time is up, Ms. Peterson. Thank you.

Tim O'Connor. Tim O'Connor.

Okay. Hunter Hollenbeck.

HUNTER HOLLENBECK: My name is Hunter

Hollenbeck. My dad is Mark Hollenbeck. And

he's been the manager of Powertech since I was

two years old. Right now I'm 12 years old.

Besides working on this uranium project, my dad is a certified organic rancher. Very close to this project site.

I love ranching. I try to help my dad with it every chance I get. My long range plan is to live and work off the ranch, too. However, I'm going to need a job.

Do you think it'll be operating by the time
I'm out of college? If all goes well, that will
be about eight years from now.

The main reason I wanted to speak here today is to let you know that not only do my parents, my three sisters, and the ranch by

Dewey-Burdock, but so does my uncle, my grandma, and my grandpa who used to live in Dewey until my grandpa died a couple years ago, and now

Grandma lives in Edgemont. Also my aunt and her family live in this area, and I know almost everyone who ranches near us, and a good many people in town.

My mom is a teacher in Edgemont, and she knows that our school could use a few more students. So I hope people with kids would get some jobs here.

The main point I wanted to make is that my dad would never take any risks with our water or our land or environment or anything. Our family and land is what makes it all happen.

Over the years I've learned a lot about in-situ mining process, and I know it would be safe and our water will be fine. I want people from other towns to learn more about it so that they could quit trying to stop it and let it get started.

That's it for now. I appreciate you letting a teenager voice his strong opinion on this.

Thank you.

REGIONAL JUDICIAL OFFICER SUTIN: Thank you, Mr. Hollenbeck.

Carl Shaw.

CARL SHAW: Good day to each of you. My name is Carl Shaw. I am a former mayor of Edgemont, South Dakota, the host community for the Dewey-Burdock project.

With few exceptions, this community is strongly in support of Powertech's proposed in-situ uranium project. The Dewey-Burdock site is about 13 miles northwest of our community, and we expect that our schools, our infrastructure, and our business will see the benefits of this project.

Powertech has been a good corporate citizen of Edgemont since they opened their office here

two years ago. They have been very open with us in explaining the project in detail.

We look forward to the economic activity
that it will bring to our small community. Over
the years we've had an awful lot of kids from
our area earn engineering and science degrees,
and then have to go elsewhere to find meaningful
work. Others have gone to Wyoming or North
Dakota to work in technical and service-oriented
jobs.

Personally, I look forward to having good jobs nearby so that our young people can stay here or return here to work and raise a family.

As an elected official, I take my office and responsibilities very seriously. And I think our city council did that when they passed this resolution of support for the Dewey-Burdock project. I have a copy of it right here.

Jim Turner was our mayor when this was signed, but Jim has since passed away. So I will do the honors of presenting this to you with this copy of the resolution in support for the Dewey-Burdock project, and ask that it be included in the record of this hearing.

In conclusion, I want to emphasize my

personal strong support for the Dewey-Burdock project, and I hope you will finalize this subject and commence quickly and without unduly burdening the company. More than ten years is more than enough time to get this project started. Thank you.

REGIONAL JUDICIAL OFFICER SUTIN: Thank you.

JOHN PUTNAM: John Putnam.

I have an aversion to microphones, just so you know.

Good evening. Thank you for the opportunity to speak here today. My name is John Putnam, and I'm from the heart of Dewey-Burdock. I live and work on my ranch, which was homesteaded by my great-grandfather about 120 years ago. I am one of only two people that live inside the boundaries of the mine permit area.

I am also a resident of Argentine Township.

Much of the Dewey-Burdock ISR project is located in Argentine Township. And I just deposited the resolution for the -- in the box over there. So Argentine Township has signed a resolution in support of the project.

We live and ranch there. Our families depend on the groundwater for our livelihoods

and our everyday life. If anyone's livelihood or quality of life were at risk with this project, it would be us.

I request that you rule on the side of science and not emotion on these permits. Thank you.

REGIONAL JUDICIAL OFFICER SUTIN: Thank you, Mr. Putnam.

Eileen Ohliger.

EILEEN OHLIGER: Hello, my name is Eileen
Ohliger, and currently I'm residing in
Hot Springs, South Dakota. Previous to this
time I've sent in written comments to you guys,
and I would like you to just know that I don't
support this.

And the reason being, I'm originally from

New Jersey. And being from New Jersey and

seeing what has happened with the pollutants

with, like, Oyster Creek with the nuclear plant,

having friends at home currently that have

issues, that -- I have a friend that recent- -
that currently lives outside of where the plant

was, in what is considered a Superfund area that

has been cleaned up. His dogs go outside and

they still get blisters on their feet. There's

loads of people that have cancers.

What I have seen coming from the east coast and coming from an area where there -- they supposedly, you know, the EPA come in and cleaned up, I've seen oil spills, I've seen things with the nuclear plant. I have -- I'm in this area for a reason, because this is a very clean, pristine -- and the water here is very clean.

Coming from New Jersey, I also know that companies, they do things for money. And right now, I believe, for me personally, is that this is very greed-driven. Because to me, yes, you say about uranium and mining uranium, well, it doesn't look to me that uranium -- and research that I've done -- I worked for the public school system for 25 years, back out east.

And I've done a lot of research and I've done a lot of reading, and it doesn't seem to me that the money for uranium is what it's about.

To me what my concern is is that Superfund sites, what happens with all the contaminates, everything that's going to be put into the ground or put someplace else, and supposedly be cleaned up.

To me it seems more like an issue that is, where -- where are they going to put this? And what happens if an outside company comes in and purchases, you know, money rights. Are we just going to become a toxic dump here?

I'm not saying that New Jersey is a toxic dump, but I'm from New Jersey for a couple hundred years. And I have seen what has happened with pollution, with big corporations. With people being, in my opinion, greed-driven for money, money, and not seeing what happens afterwards.

Because a number of years later, there's still things that happen, and there's still effects on people and animals and plants and everything. And it's my concern that out here, if this does become like a Superfund site, a place where people are going to allow other countries -- if it's so safe, why are these people not doing this where they live? Why are they not doing this where they live?

Live where you live, drink the water that's there, live in that area, and see. Because in my lifetime, I have seen what has happened out east, and seen what has happened in a lot of

different, different ways.

And I've seen what's happened with water, too. And to me, it's an issue with water.

Everyone needs water. Water is precious. Why even take the chance? I -- I just don't -- I just can't understand.

You know, coming from where I've come from and then living in a such a beautiful area like this with, you know, so many beautiful people and surroundings and just everything is really, you know, very well-cared for, why even consider anything like this at all? Why even consider this? For money, for monetary purposes? To eventually become a toxic -- you know, a dump area.

Things may have not happened now and people are saying, okay, well, yes, it's clean, we wouldn't want to do anything to hurt, you know, our families and our relatives. You wouldn't want -- nobody wants that to happen.

But in the long run, there is no proof that this would be -- you know, if there is any contamination, that this will be cleaned up, this will be restored to its -- you, know, its exact condition.

And this is not just about us here. This will spread out. This water is not just this concentrated area here. This water supplies many millions of people. Every little tributary, every little thing is connected.

And I've seen what salt water does. They

And I've seen what salt water does. They say salt water, you can't drink salt water. You can't drink brackish water either. Because where I lived, there was fresh and salt water, comes together, makes brackish water.

The animals, the fish get parasites. It needs to be monitored for bacteria. There's a tremendous amount of issues that would come later on.

Yes, it might seem like it's okay now. But like I said, in my lifetime and what I've seen, I don't -- I don't think it's a good idea. I think it's -- you know, it's a pretty -- it's a bad idea. And I've already sent, you know, in my comments and stuff previous for my entire family.

Thank you, guys, for coming in to listen to everyone, too. Thanks.

REGIONAL JUDICIAL OFFICER SUTIN: Thank you. Miles Englebert.

MILES ENGLEBERT: Hello. My name is Miles Englebert, and I live and ranch on Dewey Road with my family. I've been a part of that community my whole life with going to preschool and graduating from Edgemont two years ago.

My ranch is on the proposed Dewey-Burdock site, and I support the Dewey-Burdock project.

My support may come as a great surprise to the opponents who live in Rapid City, Nemo,

Pine Ridge, Hot Springs, and other areas.

In reality, they have very little at stake except they will likely share the economic benefits to the state and local region.

I've taken the opportunity to become familiar with this project. And I am comfortable with it proceeding on our property.

I'm saying this as a rancher who values water as much or more than anyone, as water is imperative to our way of life, to our very existence here.

I want to have the opportunity to come back here and ranch. And if I thought this project would jeopardize my chance of coming back and ruining my family ranch in any way, I would not have any support with this project at all.

It would be nice to get these permits

1 finalized as quickly as possible without making 2 Powertech jump through a bunch of new hoops. 3 This has taken far too long. And I look forward to having good jobs 4 5 nearby so myself and my brothers have the 6 opportunity to come back and ranch and work off 7 the ranch as well so we can live here. 8 you. 9 REGIONAL JUDICIAL OFFICER SUTIN: Thank you, 10 Mr. Englebert. 11 Kathleen Jarvis. 12 KATHLEEN JARVIS: Hi, how are you? My name 13 is Kathleen Jarvis. REGIONAL JUDICIAL OFFICER SUTIN: 14 15 Ms. Jarvis, can you bring the mic down. 16 KATHLEEN JARVIS: Thank you. My name is Kathleen Jarvis. I'm the former controller of 17 18 Custer State Park, former city finance officer 19 of Hermosa, I currently work in the oil and gas 20 industry. 21 The proposed Dewey-Burdock project ISL mine 22 near Edgemont, South Dakota Environmental Impact 23 Statement, the SEIS, fails to consider connected actions. 24 25 Comment: My concerns regarding the

Dewey-Burdock project are centered around the problems of artesian flow and interactions with the remediation of buried chemical warfare material located at the Black Hills Army Depot less than ten miles to the south.

Furthermore, Powertech's experts propose land application areas on river terraces and deep well injection into aquifers within the project boundaries under the sanctions of EPA permits to be exempted from the Safe Drinking Water Acts, SDWA 1977 and 1986.

Surface water flow in channels is ephemeral, except for perennial Beaver Creek. U.S. Army Corps of Engineers permits under Section 404 of the Clean Water Act, it will be required before conducting work in jurisdictional wetlands.

The Dewey Burdock project will transmit the applied and/or injected waste directly into the area of the Beaver Creek watershed, within the upper Cheyenne River watershed of the Cheyenne River to flow eastward through the state of South Dakota and into the Missouri River affecting the entire Missouri River Basin.

Water quality: Other areas are dealing with primary and secondary water quality issues. See

the Southern Black Hills Water System Appraisal Report.

For example, the town of Edgemont has quality concerns with primary drinking water standards relative to some categories of radionuclides, example, alpha particles that can result in increased risk of cancer.

Edgemont has shown a test of 17 milligrams per liter on alpha particles and the U.S.

Environmental Protection Agency limit is 15 milligrams per liter.

The problem of artesian flow: Artesian springs act as a relief valve for the aquifers and are an important mechanism in controlling water levels in these aquifers. Spring flow of many large artesian springs changes over slowly, very slowly in response to long-term climatic conditions.

Artesian spring flow could be diminished by large scale well withdrawals near springs, thus impacting surface water resources. Large scale development of the aquifers has the potential to influence the balance of the unique and dynamic plumbing system in the Black Hills area that controls interactions between groundwater levels

and artesian spring flow.

Artesian flow occurs when there is a hydraulic connection through faults or highly permeable strata between groundwater sources high in the landscape and the land surface lower down. The weight of the water in overlying strata exerts pressure downward into water within the uranium-bearing strata, which can be released as artesian waterflow like a fountain.

When topographically lower uranium-bearing strata is exposed at the surface or where it is punctured by drilling, artesian flow was observed or restricted by Powertech in their Dewey-Burdock project proposal, and was observed directly at the Black Hills Army Depot less than ten miles to the source -- excuse me, to the south. U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, 1992.

In order for artesian flow to occur at the Black Hills Army Depot, the water must originate topographically higher in the Black Hills and pass through the Dewey-Burdock project area.

Were this to happen with oxidant-charged lixiviate, contaminated groundwater would rust any metal-contained ordnance and release the contents into the environment.

Concluding remarks: It is very likely that the oxidants used to free the uranium will also cause the destruction of underground storage containers, i.e., buried chemical warfare material located at the Black Hills Army Depot less than ten miles to the south of the Dewey-Burdock project area, and release their contents into the area's ground and surface waters.

This huge munitions depot handled thousands of tons of chemical warfare agents such as sarin, soman, toban, GB, and VX, plus mustard, phosgene, and Lewisite.

References: U.S. Army Corps of Engineers,
1992 preliminary assessment of ordnance
contamination at the former Black Hills Army
Depot, South Dakota.

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, 1992, "Final Archive Search Report, Preliminary Assessment of Ordnance Contamination at the former Black Hills Army Depot," South Dakota, Huntsville, Alabama.

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, 2012, "Final Work Plan for Black Hills Army Depo Remedial Investigation and Feasibility Study."

REGIONAL JUDICIAL OFFICER SUTIN:

1 Ms. Jarvis, your time is up. I need you to wrap 2 up. 3 KATHLEEN JARVIS: Thank you. REGIONAL JUDICIAL OFFICER SUTIN: Thank you 4 5 very much. 6 Next if we can have Rowan, Isla, Tamarach, 7 Sea Usia. 8 Go ahead when you are ready. 9 ROWAN, ISLA, TAMARACH, SEA USIA 10 BLANCHFLOWER: (Singing in indigenous language.) 11 REGIONAL JUDICIAL OFFICER SUTIN: Thank you. 12 Thank you very much. 13 Next if we can have you Earl Tall, please. That's a hard act to follow. 14 15 EARL TALL: I heard a lot of good things 16 from these young people today, our future 17 generations. I spoke a couple days ago in 18 Rapid City, and I talked about the Bible. And 19 we all know that this land is stolen land. This 20 land belongs to Lakota people. And we need to 21 be consulted if anything is going to happen on 22 this -- in these Black Hills. 23 I want to talk a little bit about the water. 24 Water. You guys heard, water is life. 25 Wiconi. Water is more precious than gold or

uranium or any -- whatever monetary value you have. It's keeps everyone alive, including you guys.

I talked at a NRC hearing a couple years ago in Hot Springs. And I mentioned the United States should implement this COOL, Country Of Origin Labeling. Lakota people, we like our -- we like to eat meat, hamburgers, steak. And with that Country Of Origin Labeling at least we'll know where that meat is coming from. I'd sure hate to eat a cow that comes from this area with all the previous mines that are here.

This -- I was here just for the afternoon.

I have COPD, breathing difficulties. Just being here in this atmosphere is getting me sick. You guys might think it's -- you guys are safe here, but you're not. Uranium doesn't discriminate.

And that's -- there's no -- there's no way to clean our waters. No matter what kind of scientific -- how many scientists or geologists, whatever you -- they tell you that you could purify this water, it's just BS.

Our -- when we've been here for thousands of years, this place was pristine. In 500 years since Columbus thought he was in India, 500

1 years since then, you notice how this water, our 2 atmosphere, everything changes in just 500 3 years. 4 Our people were -- at one time there was 5 scalps, people paid for scalps for Indian 6 scalps. And smallpox, and blankets were given 7 to us with smallpox in it to get rid of us. Our 8 women and children were massacred, and yet we're 9 still here. We're not going nowhere. 10 A lot when -- a lot of you are gone and move on, we'll still be here. 11 12 REGIONAL JUDICIAL OFFICER SUTIN: Mr. Tall, 13 your time is up, so I need you to wrap up, 14 please. 15 EARL TALL: Okay. 16 REGIONAL JUDICIAL OFFICER SUTIN: Thank you. 17 EARL TALL: Well, in wrapping up, I guess 18 I'd like to say the Black Hills are still not 19 for sale. 20 REGIONAL JUDICIAL OFFICER SUTIN: Is Tim 21 O'Connor here? 22 Next, can we have Alex Good Cane Milk. 23 ALEX GOOD CANE MILK: Hello, cousins. How's 24 it doing today? 25 All right, got to see some smiles. All

right.

So, my name is Alex Good Cane Milk. I am
Yankton Sioux Hunkpapa, and I'm here to talk
about common sense. So there's pros and cons to
having common sense, you know.

Pro, that you have it. A con is that you have to deal with those that don't have it. So we'll just let that sink in for a little bit, you know.

You're willing to let something, doesn't matter what it is, destroy something that you're trying to live off of. Why would you allow uranium in your homes when you know it's going to destroy the lands you live off of, the water you drink, the animals you hunt, and the food, the plants that you eat.

That's common sense to me. I don't know about you guys, you know. And then yeah, think about all the money, that's awesome. But how long does that last? We all have money, big stacks of it, but then we spend it, right? And it's gone, you know. You always can make more of it.

But you destroy this land, you can't make more of it. You just can't. Proven fact.

Common sense.

You know, so I just wish that you guys would use your common sense. I realize what you are doing. And don't be that person that messed it up for everybody. We all know who that is.

Don't be that person. That's all I'm saying.

You guys have a good day.

REGIONAL JUDICIAL OFFICER SUTIN: Thank you. Sophia Blackcloud.

SOPHIA BLACKCLOUD: Hello, again. I'm just going to finish off where I left off before I was stopped, so. Okay. So again, I was reading out of literature that I thought was important to my people and for the people of this town to hear.

So it is time for -- it is time for us to begin. It is time for our tired nation to stop right where we are and look back, see where we came from and where we are now and where we are going on.

It is time to remember Sitting Bull and all that he was and is to our people and to our way of life. And it is time to talk with respect within our nation.

We must demand it without compromise.

Compromise comes once respect is obtained. In 1990 December 15th -- or, I'm sorry, in 2017, December 15th will be exactly 127 years since the murder of Chief Sitting Bull.

On that day the mourning of our Chief must come to an end. December 15, 2017 let us gather together as one people, as one nation, a nation the Great Spirit chose out of all other Indian nations to send us, his messenger, the sacred White Buffalo Calf Pipe Woman, to bring us the sacred pipe to worship him and to share with all other nations.

On December 15th, let 100 drums gather. It must be a time of celebration, of living, of rebuilding and moving on. Our warriors will sing a new song, a song of a new beginning, a song of victory. Let our warriors sing clear and loud, so the heartbeat of our people will be heard by Sitting Bull and all of our ancestors in a spirit world. And our two worlds will become one again.

We are a whole new generation fully educated and very capable of assuming control over our own affairs, capable of doing business with the U.S. and other countries with far greater effect

than what is being done now.

We are a new generation capable of rebuilding our nation. And this is the direction we must move in and move together as one. The direction we will move in is that of a modern high-tech world, but in that world there is nothing that we are not capable of understanding.

In our new generation we now have people educated in almost every kind of job skill that exists. We must learn to use our education towards rebuilding our nation and securing a better future for our children. We now have the knowledge of two ways of life. And we can balance them equally.

Knowledge with wisdom, high-tech machinery, with tradition, Indian businessmen listening to their chiefs, and chiefs listening to Indian businessmen.

Chief Sitting Bull lives in the spirit world. We know this is true. We know also that he would want us to live and rebuild so our children can have good, happy lives and the old people restful last years.

Many times Sitting Bull would ride around

camp and sing messages to the people. Let us send to our great Chief a new song to sing when he rides around the people in the spirit world.

Look at our children, they are going to live again. They are going to live again, Sitting Bull says as he rides.

On December 15th, let us gather as one nation to honor Chief Sitting Bull and the warriors who stand by him. Let us together -- let us come together to honor his dreams, his words of wisdom, his strength, his leadership. Let us gather to celebrate his memory with pride, commitment, and a new beginning and a new direction. Let us come together as one and then move together as one.

We are the Great Teton Lakota Nation. Let the spirit of Sitting Bull leap with joy that his people have been awakened.

Written by Warrior Who Comes Home Alone.

And so that's all that I wanted to read and I'm done. I've gotten a chance. Thank you.

But then I had a couple of other things that I wanted to bring up aside from speaking with my people.

REGIONAL JUDICIAL OFFICER SUTIN: You just

1 have a minute, so yeah. 2 SOPHIA BLACKCLOUD: Okay. Well, I was -- I 3 went around the town and I tried to find ice. So in doing that, certain people wanted to tell 4 5 me directions, others didn't. Mainly children 6 were happy to oblige, once again with just 7 kindness. 8 And so it seemed that everybody was afraid 9 to come here to speak or to have a voice in this 10 town. So it makes me wonder what is being 11 taught. 12 You said your wife was a teacher, 13 Mr. Hollenbeck. Your poor son. I'm sorry, 14 Mark, I feel for you. I really do. I really 15 do. You're not being taught the truth. 16 AUDIENCE MEMBER: You don't know what the 17 truth is. 18 SOPHIA BLACKCLOUD: You're not being taught 19 about other people's rights. About water. 20 You -- it just, it makes me afraid for the 21 future of the children that --22 REGIONAL JUDICIAL OFFICER SUTIN: 23 Ms. Blackcloud, I'd ask that you address your 24 comments to us and not to people in the crowd. 25 SOPHIA BLACKCLOUD: Okay. So then I wanted

to know, your local dump right now, I guess
there's being drilling oil drilling done
here. And I want to know where that water and
whatnot is being dumped. Because I heard from
your local town that it's being dumped right
back into your dump.
It's not being disposed of properly. So
therefore, it's back in your water that you're
drinking. Your water jugs are not filled in the
back. The water we gave you, you're not
drinking.
REGIONAL JUDICIAL OFFICER SUTIN:
Ms. Blackcloud, your time is up.
SOPHIA BLACKCLOUD: That's all I have to
say. Again, it feels more cold like, and it
just it doesn't feel if I owned half of a
town or mayored it, I'm sure that I'd have half
the town behind me as well.
REGIONAL JUDICIAL OFFICER SUTIN: Thank you,
Ms
SOPHIA BLACKCLOUD: Money doesn't rule
everything. Think with your heart.
REGIONAL JUDICIAL OFFICER SUTIN: Tasina
Smith.
TASINA SMITH: Hi, again. I spoke

yesterday. My name is Tasina Sapa Win. That means Black Shawl Woman in Lakota.

(Speaking in indigenous language.) Of the Cheyenne River Sioux Reservation which is, you know, running right through -- the Cheyenne River, runs right through this town. This beautiful, beautiful town.

So I'm back again to first say this: First and foremost, this is completely illegal. The Black Hills belong to the Lakota. You need to recognize that right now, and foremost, before we can go on with anymore permits.

We need to start recognizing our treaty, recognizing our children's future. I mean, we have people who, you know, are so ignorant of the facts here. Really, ultimately, when I hear from locals or from the opposite side, all they can really come up with is money as a pro to this permit being granted. That's really all it is.

So when we have, like, all this statistics showing and then also evidence of Crow Butte and what happened there, and how the uranium mine is still not cleared up, and you left a mess there, where it's contaminating that water in the

earth. I mean, you have the facts showing. So the only other thing I can think of other than, you know, ignorance or, you know, greed is racism at its finest.

And for you to be the agency that is going to either grant or deny this permit, you're either granting or denying racism in your country yet again, and inflicting genocide on our people yet again.

Because when it leaks and it contaminates this -- the aquifers underneath, it will go right into the Cheyenne River, which then goes into the Missouri River, which 20 million people downstream rely or for drinking water, these are facts we're looking at. Not opinions. We need to go by facts.

Another fact, you know, 500 years my people have been through attempted genocide. Where this country has been built on the backs of slaves and off the profits of indigenous resources, on stolen land. Recognize this. Understand it.

Do you have a conscience? Will you be able to go home if you were to permit this and actually look into your family's eyes and said

you did something right?

It's scary. You guys literally have the power of my child's future in your hand, and his health and his well-being. You have that power, not me, not any of these people in this room.

You do. Please make the right decision. You know what's right.

We shouldn't even be coming to this and having to voice this. We shouldn't. You shouldn't have to hear what we have to say. You should already know what's right. I mean, you'd be a mass murderer. Would you be able to let that rest on your conscience until the day you die?

Please don't poison me. And most of all, please don't poison my son. Please don't poison those children that were just standing up here. That took a lot of courage to sing you a song. I know when I was that age, I didn't have that strength and courage. But they get it.

Our children are the betterment of our generation. They have -- they know more. They get history, they have recent history with us. They'll know all this. They'll find out.

Don't be that part of history where you're

going to be the ones to blame. When we're all contaminated, when we're all dying of cancer at skyrocket rates. Don't be that. Be somebody that we can actually trust. You're the Environmental Protection Agency. Live up to your damn name, please.

Because if you don't start respecting us,

not -- I'm not just talking about indigenous

people, I'm taking about everybody, every single

one of us, you are our relatives, too. We have

the same hearts, the same minds, the same lungs,

the same air we breathe, the same food we eat,

the same atmosphere we're exposed to.

We live in this world together. We need to co-exist together. And find renewable energy, and ways with renewable energy. Start funding towards it. Because this addiction to uranium and fossil fuels is killing you.

REGIONAL JUDICIAL OFFICER SUTIN: Ms. Smith, your time is up.

TASINA SMITH: All of us. Respect us, please. Or once again, expect more of us to come. Thank you.

REGIONAL JUDICIAL OFFICER SUTIN: Thank you. Kathleen Bailey.

KATHLEEN BAILEY: Again, the profound truth of the chronic abuse of the indigenous peoples. I can't -- I'm here -- I -- I've already spoken three times and presented all that I was capable of presenting.

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Right now, I apologize, but I want to throw out some data response to some of what was said by those from the industry.

I learned -- I had to learn about radionuclides because of an issue that we had at a simple water treatment plant, and the levels of radionuclides that were ever increasing in the byproducts, the sludge. And so I learned all about it from EPA documents mostly.

And they list each of the radionuclides, uranium, radium-226, -228, radon, gross alpha, gross beta, and all the cancers that are associated with chronic exposure for each of those radionuclides.

There is a dose concentration. There's low Those are low risk radiation sources. However, low risk does not mean zero risk, and the risk that they were talking about is the risk of developing these diseases.

They are called scol- -- and I cannot

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pronounce it. I don't even know if I spelled it. I wasn't prepared to talk about this.

But again, it's from an EPA document, stochastic effects from chronic exposure to low dose radiation. And it is heartbreaking to hear this sort of thing danced around as if it is nothing.

And I heard this when this particular municipality was continuing to say it's no more radiation than that from living in a brick home. The concentration when you are pulling out these naturally occurring radioactive elements changes. The exposure changes when you're working with them.

Yellowcake is an intensified collection of uranium. Uranium is pretty much the mother of radium-226, -228, radon, gross alpha and gross beta. And you are concentrating, you are pulling it out from its natural form in doing that.

Every time you have any radioactive element, radionuclide in low dose, and that volume changes through whatever the processing, water, pulling out it out of the water, whatever, you are creating a higher value in that Rem, the

real Rem, that is calculated with the picocuries per liter or picocuries per gram when dealing with a soil or a sludge.

It's picocuries per gram if you're dealing with water solution; it's picocuries per liter -- I think that it's liter, and I apologize, I forget. I wasn't prepared to talk about this.

And then if you're going to identify the Rem, which is the measurement of the radiation dose that you are getting every year in that exposure to that low dose radiation, it's called millirem.

It's in -- it's in -- it's the measure of the radiation equal to -- a Rem is a radiation equal to X-ray, an equal level of X-ray. And it does take a high level of Rem from radionuclides to equal that.

But the result is health effects. And the result is most often cancer. Not everyone in the population will get it. More people are more susceptible than others, that's why it's called a low risk.

Those who are statistically calculated to be susceptible to that are a small enough number

that they are actually almost written off. But when you are the person who has developed the cancer because of your reaction to that chronic exposure to that level of radiation, it is 100 percent risk.

So it should never be minimized, laughed at, or talked about. It took almost a year to prove the difference between living in a brick home and being exposed to the sludge that this particular municipality started storing in 2011, '12, '13, '14, and '15 sludge at levels that were so high, when they finally uncovered on site where these people were working -- and this is a water plant -- and the levels skyrocketed in 2009.

And they started stockpiling when the state finally stopped them from disposing in a municipal treatment -- municipal landfills because the radiation level went through the -- was so high. Or, not the radiation level, the concentration of the radionuclides were so high.

REGIONAL JUDICIAL OFFICER SUTIN:

Ms. Bailey, your time is up. I need you to wrap
up, please.

KATHLEEN BAILEY: Okav. So when they

started stockpiling, a year later three people got cancer at the site and two of their wives. The following year, another person got cancer at the site, in '13. He's one of the few still surviving and fighting. And one -- another one got it in 2015 and died. All on the same site.

And we get the same thing. You can't prove that it's associated with the radiation from the radionuclides. And it is -- it breaks my heart to have otherwise intelligent, capable engineers and workers and everything minimize -- and -- minimize a proven consequence of this level of exposure, even at low dose. And I just had to throw that out.

REGIONAL JUDICIAL OFFICER SUTIN: Thank you, Ms. Bailey.

Isaiah Cox.

ISAIAH COX: Well, I'm Isaiah Cox. And I'm here a third time. And I'm here because I believe that we can save this land, you know.

And anyway, so, let's take the earth, you know, as a paint, like a painted circle, but it's filled with different kind of paints on the inside. So it's pretty much beautiful.

And anyway, if you start taking the uranium

out, and just fill it in with, like, black paint, you know, it becomes less beautiful, as you can tell because -- and, if you continue to do this, eventually the whole circle will become black. So that's one reason why you shouldn't do this.

Also is that, when you really think about it, water is money. I mean, think about it.

Because humans eat, like, animals and stuff and vegetables. But the -- like, the vegetables and the animals, they need water. So water is pretty much the same as life.

And well, that life will feed other life, and that life would end up being humans, and we would -- and we created the money pretty much. So in that case, water is money then. If you try to continue to mine the uranium, water will become money.

So one more thing is that, why would you try to ruin such a beautiful place, you know?

That's something I don't get, because if you're trying to -- like, if you're doing this for money, all right, think about it, you don't -- well, money isn't the solution to everything.

So why would you do this if you can easily

1 just get what you need by actually working for 2 it instead of doing something, like, the easy 3 way, you know? So. REGIONAL JUDICIAL OFFICER SUTIN: Thank you, 4 5 Mr. Cox. 6 Kenneth Barker. 7 KENNETH BARKER: Thank you for this 8 opportunity to speak. My name is Kenneth 9 Barker. I didn't come prepared to speak. I've 10 been branding calves this afternoon, so I'm not 11 dressed for it, but I -- I just feel compelled 12 to let you know that if wasn't for uranium, I 13 wouldn't be here in Edgemont. 14 I've lived here for pretty close to 60 years 15 now. I'm 83 years old now. And also, I have some land in -- down near Crow Butte mining at 16 17 Crawford, Nebraska, adjoins that. And the well 18 is okay, everything is good. 19 And I'd just ask you not to let this 20 emotional propaganda overpower our engineering 21 studies. Thank you. 22 REGIONAL JUDICIAL OFFICER SUTIN: Thank you, 23 Mr. Barker. 24 Don Matt. 25 DON MATT: Thank you. One young man here

said we need some smiles. So I'm going to share something that a tribal elder shared at a tribal interpolicy meeting. He said, They tell me that they called us Indians because Columbus was looking for India. He said, I'm just really thankful that Columbus was not looking for Turkey.

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After hearing some of the testimony here today, I went home and I went to the internet, and I've given the EPA a copy of this. I believe you still have it.

This is from the Congressional Research Service. And it's called: Indian Water Rights Under the Winters Doctrine, An Overview. This is an 11-page review, and I'm going to quote from it.

Starting off in the summary, the first paragraph says: Although the federal government has authority to regulate water, it typically defers to the states to allocate water resources within the state.

The federal government maintains certain federal water rights, though, which exist separate from state law.

I'm going to repeat that: Separate from

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state law.

You as the EPA are the guardians of federal water rights.

And this is from the Congressional Review:
In particular, Federal reserved water rights
often arise in questions of water allocation
related to federal lands, including Indian
reservations. Indian reserved water rights were
first recognized by the U.S. Supreme Court in
Winters versus United States in 1908.

Under the Winters Doctrine, when Congress reserves land, i.e. for an Indian reservation, Congress also reserves water sufficient to fulfill the purpose of the reservation.

And I'm going to skip to page 5, to the heart of the matter here. Paragraph heading, Water Quality: Degradation of water quality would undermine the water's use for reservation purposes. Courts have recognized water quality as another element of Indian reserved water rights. Reserved water rights.

Federal courts -- federal courts have ruled that reserved water rights holders can seek legal protection from water quality degradation by other water users. Specifically, in the

United States versus Gila Valley Irrigation

District, the Ninth Court approved a District

Court's finding that a reserved water right was impaired when other users' actions increased the salinity of water used by a tribe for irrigation of agricultural crops.

I spent two and a half years as a Native

American journalist for the Confederate, Salish,

and Kootenai tribes in Montana. And this I can

assure you, that as an EPA, this issue of water

rights, water quality, mining, it looks to me

like you're going to be facing this over and

over and over in your careers.

I would urge you to become acquainted with this doctrine. I would urge you to defend and protect water quality rights. And thank you.

REGIONAL JUDICIAL OFFICER SUTIN: Thank you,
Mr. Matt.

Tonia Stands.

TONIA STANDS: Hello. I'm Tonia Stands.

I'm from Oglala, South Dakota. And I just want
to put this sign up and let everybody look at
this. And it says: Crow Butte uranium is
evidence, is the proof of what can go wrong.

And we stand on this. Right now we live --

the White River goes by the Crow Butte uranium mine and, you know, we keep -- we keep -- we're debating over scientific and -- you know, yesterday in Hot Springs I got to speak and I got cut off and -- but what I want to state is this, is you know, our spirituality, you know, when you think about the reality of our -- of our -- of our genocide and surviving that in many various forms that have -- that we have endured, you know, you think about smallpox blankets, you think about tuberculosis, you know, the Spanish flu, you know, these are real, real close to my heart because my grandmas passed this collective knowledge, intellectual knowledge, intellectual property, you know, and that comes through us.

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You know, and we collect this knowledge.

And what's in me is my grandmas and my grandpas.

We come from Oglala into Oelrichs, and Oglala

into Smithwick. Those are natural tracks for us
to gather our plants, our berries, our tipsila.

There's so many out there.

And when you think about, again, water is life and how it puts back into those natural elements. And we don't have that right. And

we'll keep talking about religious freedom. You know, 1978, we don't -- we don't have access to our religious freedom.

They are -- they are governed by national parks, and we can't just go and pray and, you know, and do the things that we used to do here. We can't do that. And right here where the proposed site is, I mean, we don't want expose too much, but it's not a checkerboard. You remember that. It is not a checkerboard.

And you can't take it and say, Oh, this area is sacred, this area is sacred, this area is sacred. Well, I'm going to go and mine here and here where it's not sacred. You know, they did that at Crow Butte.

Oh, we know it's sacred, we know that. And they didn't consult with us. Again, they went to the state, the state preservation officer of Nebraska. And don't detach yourself on that. That is the Environmental Protection Agency.

Again, we keep reiterating that.

And how do you -- how do you have a program in-situ leach recovery program with these guidelines, and you're a federal agency, and your -- your chain of command is higher than the

state. And how are you not going to regulate or look at Crow Butte?

And you know what, they -- I went to these NRC hearings. And you know what they said in there? They have a monitor system. Go back through the record, they have a monitor system.

They have from the beginning, failures upon failures. And I sat in that courtroom and they said, For sure way that we have a monitor system is the snow. The snow melts and let's us know that we have a leak because our monitor systems are failing.

And do they tell us that? No, they don't tell us that. You know, we live down on the reservation, and you have to really look at this and they are sitting up right here in front of our reservations.

They don't want us here. They want us gone so they can keep profiting off our sacred Black Hills. So they are on purposely doing this.

And my grandmas, they used to come and camp here in the park. That was our campsite. They detached us from that and sent us to the reservations. And then when we -- we got a pass to get off the reservation, we come back here to

our home, we can't come back here.

They -- they have this land, land steal in the Black Hills. So these guys, you know, immigrants came in here, and all they had to do was get a tool, a mining tool, strike it on the ground, and there's a whole land area that became theirs. That's how easy this land grab in the Black Hills became.

You stole it. Our treaties, they confined us to the reservations, took our rights. And they were -- when we were off our reservation area, you know, we had to get a pass. And they would hunt us down. And each town, they have a hang site where, if they caught an Indian, they would take them up there and hang them.

Rapid City has a hangman's cliff.

And this is the reality. We can't come here, you know. You're supposed to protect the environment, you know. You have this in-situ leach mining program, and it destroys our aguifers.

And you remember those are in Lakota. Those are in Lakota. Those -- those are -- the mining operations that they want to operate in, those are in Lakota.

1 REGIONAL JUDICIAL OFFICER SUTIN: Your time 2 is up, Ms. Stands. Thank you. 3 REGIONAL JUDICIAL OFFICER SUTIN: Robert White Mountain. 4 5 ROBERT WHITE MOUNTAIN: I'm back. Thank 6 you, EPA, for doing this hearing. I just wanted 7 to say a couple things. First of all, something 8 is kind of troubling. During the break here I 9 was outside, and I really didn't feel good about -- we came here, you know, just to voice 10 11 our opinions. 12 And in return, we had some young men from 13 this town go by and say racial things to us. 14 Try to incite a riot, you know. It's like, why 15 is this turning racial? Why? We're all human 16 beings. It doesn't need to get racial. Doesn't 17 need to get violent. I just wanted to share 18 that. 19 And also, you know, I feel for this 20 community. And I realize that -- I've traveled 21 all over this country, and I see that, as I feel 22 for this community because you have no jobs, you 23 have no growth here, you know. 24 This -- there was a mine here for 29 years, 25 but this town didn't even grow. It was just

1 like a little dead town, you know, really.
2 It's -- you're depending on this gold to come in

3 and revive this town.

There's like gazillions of towns all over this United States that are in just the same situation as this town. All kinds of towns that are dying in this whole country. So I feel for this community in that respect.

At the same time, I've been learning more about this process. I talked with the manager, Mr. Hollenbeck. I just met him, so I don't mean to -- but he was explaining part of the stuff there, you know, and he -- at the end he said, It's a theory. It's a theory of how we're going to be able to clean the water and be able to get it back to its -- you know, at least drinkable or usable. It's a theory.

So that kind of like, this doesn't sit good with me, you know. Then I talked to a couple local residents here, and they informed me, you know, that -- how -- I was always wondering how the Cheyenne River got poisoned to the point where my relatives in Cheyenne River can't even eat the fish. They come out two heads, three heads, four heads, whatever. Why can't they eat

the fish?

So I kind of -- I talked to a local resident here, and he informed me, you know, that there's -- okay. So, part of this process that you say is safe, that might be possibly safe. But the biggest thing, you know -- and everybody is talking about the aquifers and all this. That's important, you know.

And another thing that wasn't really talked about too much today that I have noticed is the waste. I was told that there's billions -- not billions. But there's tons of waste right over here, buried under some dirt, and nothing will grow on top of that. It's all white.

So that was -- that was the -- the way that they handle this waste, was just to make more waste and to destroy more land here. So that's like -- that's my concern.

Okay. Now, you're saying the process itself might be a little bit safe, and you're still -- you know, it's a theory that could be safe.

It's not 100 percent. There's no 100 percent guarantee that it's completely safe. I haven't heard that yet.

And so then you've got all these tailings.

You got all the leftovers from all this mining.

And that's poisoning. So I really had -- how is

it that Cheyenne River can't eat their fish?

Then I find out today why. I didn't really

know. I didn't understand why.

It's because where they are mining, this mine here back in '60 to '89, they had a whole bunch of tailings and a whole bunch of this dust that was piled up there somewhere by the river. And then the rains came and it pushed it out into the river, and it poisoned all the way down the river.

So it might -- it might not -- it may not have poisoned here, but it poisoned everybody down river. And that's something you guys have to live with. This community has to live with that.

You know, I'm not trying to give you any kind of -- any kind of emotional dramatics or any kind of emotional, you know, what do you call it -- the other guy said, whatever, propaganda, you know.

I'm just talking to you straight up.

Straight up. Man to man, person to person,
human to human. That's all. No propaganda.

Not trying, to you know, to do anything. I'm just trying to inform my opinion of what I think. You know, whatever I feel, that's it. No propaganda. That's all.

And I was here 36 years ago over here. I kind of noticed, I went out -- we got surrounded over here when we were trying to defend our sacred site from what they did here, what they mined here. We defended over there 36 years ago.

That was in Craven Canyon, to defend some great sacred writings here. I noticed that there was a couple guys around here. Because we got surrounded. You know, they surrounded us and it was under siege. I remember that. All we were doing was trying to protect. That's all.

But anyway, that's a little -- I wanted to finish that. But like I said, I feel for this community, you know, because it's -- you know, I look around, I see it. But you know, there's also other ways to make money.

You could bring industry here, you can bring alternative energy and create a plant here, some sort of jobs. You could get all kinds more jobs

than what you're go- -- what you're investing in with this mine.

Because you're going to kill lots more

people that are down river because you -- you

have no way -- there's no way to -- EPA -- I

mean, I see all these tailings, all these open

mines, and all these open -- all these, whatever

you call these, test sites, boreholes. They are

not covered and they are dangerous. They are

still dangerous to the people.

It's like, we need to really clean those up. You know, as EPA, as a person to person, we really need to clean these up. It's very important, you know, environmental protection, protect the environment. And I really feel that. So I thank you for your time. I know you're going to cut me off, so.

REGIONAL JUDICIAL OFFICER SUTIN: Thank you.

At this time, those are all the folks that have signed cards to speak. If there is anyone in the audience who has not spoken yet today or over the course of the last four days who would like to get up and speak, please do so.

Have you signed a -- will you sign a card?

DOROTHY ROWLAND SUN BEAR: Yeah, I'll sign

1 one. 2 REGIONAL JUDICIAL OFFICER SUTIN: Dorothy 3 Rowland Sun Bear. 4 DOROTHY ROWLAND SUN BEAR: Hello, everyone. 5 My name is Dorothy Rowland Sun Bear. I come 6 from Wounded Knee, South Dakota on the 7 Pine Ridge Indian Reservation. Concentration 8 Camp 344. 9 I oppose this uranium mine. America is 10 built on stolen land. They came and stole our 11 land here, and they are digging holes 12 everywhere. The Black Hills are like cheese 13 now. So full of holes. We need to stop. 14 Recognize our treaties and stop mining in 15 our Black Hills. Stop stealing our natural 16 resources. Leave it in the ground. Thank you. 17 (Speaking in indigenous language.) 18 AUDIENCE MEMBER: Excuse me. I'll be right 19 outside having lunch. We found a turtle out 20 here, and it's got a deformed face from your 21 waters. 22 AUDIENCE MEMBER: Would you like to see your 23 turtle? We found it out here sitting eating 24 lunch. 25 AUDIENCE MEMBER: We're going to take it to

safer waters. Would never put it back in these 1 2 waters. 3 AUDIENCE MEMBER: Thank you. REGIONAL JUDICIAL OFFICER SUTIN: Thank you. 4 5 Anyone else who would like to get up and speak 6 who has not spoken yet? 7 Carol Harding. 8 CAROL HARDING: I'm Carol Harding. I have 9 lived in Edgemont about maybe 43 years. I'm a school teacher. I've been a teacher for 10 11 probably 30 years here in our system, and this 12 isn't typical of me at all. And thank God none 13 of my family is here. 14 So, but I came as a school teacher here. I 15 married a hometown boy, who has grown up here 16 and lived here all his life except for when he went to college. And so we've made our home 17 18 here. We've raised three kids. 19 They are adults and they come home all the 20 time. They drink our water all the time. 21 would never, ever advocate something that I felt 22 would harm my children or my grandchildren, 23 because now I have two precious babies. And 24 they come home to our house still. 25 And I'm passionate about where I live, and

how I feel our community is. And it saddens me when other people come from other places and put down our community when they don't live here.

And I'm also very sad about whoever the young people were that said racial slurs to you, because that is not typical of the majority of our kids. And I'm sorry that they did it.

I wish I knew who it was, because I'm also a huge advocate for our kids here. But I'm also -- I clomp on them pretty hard when they don't respect adults or other nationalities or whatever it is. There's no excuse for rudeness, and I'm sorry. I apologize for them.

But anyways, I'm very happy to live here.

I'm very happy to raise my children here, and

now our grandchildren come. And I support the

project. I don't know a lot about it, that's

very true.

But I do know some of the people involved, and I trust their judgment with the scientific knowledge they have and who they have turned to for evidence and the answers. Thank you.

REGIONAL JUDICIAL OFFICER SUTIN: Thank you, Ms. Harding.

Anyone else in the audience who has not

1 spoken who would like to? 2 (Pause.) 3 Is there anyone else who would like to speak? I'll ask for those folks who have spoken 4 5 several times, your comments needs to be 6 addressed to us and not to the folks in the 7 audience. Okay. Thank you. 8 AUDIENCE MEMBER: Do it any ways. 9 WANIYA LOCKE: I, too, am an educator. 10 have a bachelor's in Native American studies and 11 linguistics, and I also have a criminal justice 12 degree. And as an educator, I truly cannot look 13 at my students and honestly tell them that they 14 have a bright future when uranium mines, copper 15 mines, pipelines are coming in every single day. 16 I, too, am from South Dakota. I, too, grew 17 up in small-town communities. And we are 18 literally in the last stages. The environmental 19 fight has been going on since the '60s, and 20 we're still fighting it. We're still fighting 21 racism. We're still fighting social injustice 22 and social ailments. 23 And what it all boils down to is money. All

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our social ailments boil down to money, and

corporations that have bought out our governing

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systems.

So I'm asking you guys to really listen to the people that have come here with good hearts, good words, and that actually have -- that actually have a stake in this.

Because my children do have a stake in this. They have a claim to the Hills. My children are truly Lakota-Dakota children that speak their own language, that can trace back their ancestors nine generations prior to Europeanism. So they should be acknowledged, and their future should be considered.

So as a true educator that has taught at prestigious schools, that has taught at private schools, that has taught at college level, I honestly cannot look at my students and tell them, You can grow up to be anything you want, but you can't have clean air, you can't have clean water.

So this uranium permit is huge. You have to factor in all the other water uses that are going on in South Dakota. And the fact that DAP had a spill in Spink County after we stood out there for nine months protesting against a government system and our worst fears were

confirmed.

And then you look at Washington at the same time again, Hanford, Washington has got evacuated, a small town like this. This is evidence. This is pure, 100 percent evidence. This is not fact or opinion, nor does it have to do with race. An entire town was evacuated.

So as an educator, I'm asking you to really think of the future. Why should we educate young children if I can't promise them drinking water or clean air?

REGIONAL JUDICIAL OFFICER SUTIN: Thank you.

KATHLEEN BAILEY: Sorry. Me again.

REGIONAL JUDICIAL OFFICER SUTIN: Please say your name for the court reporter.

KATHLEEN BAILEY: Kathleen Bailey. I just wanted to respond, and I don't know if this was -- I am one of the people who are coming from outside of the state. And I wanted to assure you, this is not disrespect to the state, this is not disrespect to the citizens.

This is my personal concern for a rare commodity, our water. And I am a treehugger since the '60s. I was born in '49. So, yes, I am an environmentalist by heart. And all, from

the amoeba on up to all life forms, I'm just focusing on this water, because this is the source.

I'm trying to stop an action that threatens an incredibly important aquifer that actually addresses more than just the state of South Dakota. So it is a huge, huge, important moment that this be stopped. Because this changes everything if it is approved, and it will impact many aquifers all over our country.

So it is also a selfish thing that I am doing, because I live, my children live, my grandchildren live, even though I'm not a South Dakotan. But I had to come up here because I feel so much about this, because I can't stand silent while it's happening anywhere.

So I'm not here to offend anyone, and I do have a different side than some of you, a different opinion. But I'm not here to offend you. I'm here to defend water, from my perspective. I don't mean for anybody to take it personally, as far as a citizen here. Thank you.

REGIONAL JUDICIAL OFFICER SUTIN: Ms. Kile.

Please state your name.

NANCY KILE: My name is Nancy Kile. I'm from Sioux County, born and raised in Crawford, Nebraska where Crow Butte is at. And I just wanted to -- to state about the fact that we aren't welcome here and we're intruding on this community, and those kind of things.

And I just want to say that I trusted my town leadership as well. I trusted what was going on in my hometown.

During the time period -- my mom was a resident of Crawford area since the early '40s. She came from Oglala. She came to Crawford because there was jobs there.

There's an Indian camp on the White River there, and we still would like it surveyed and reach into that history of the people who belonged to this land in this area. And we're going to do that. And we're going to -- we're going to talk about Squaw Creek Road that runs by Cameco.

But Mom was a resident of Crawford. She was diagnosed with lung cancer in 2004, and died in Crawford nine months later. During that time period, one of the many Crow Butte Resources

1 documented violations was an undetected 2 poisonous spill into an underground source of 3 drinking water that lasted for two and a half years, spanning from July 1, 2003 through 4 5 March 31, 2006. 6 My community, since the Oglala Sioux Tribe 7 and the consolidated intervenors has interrupted 8 that mine permitting, something happened. 9 community became encased in racism and hate. 10 My people said that Oglala were trying to 11 take their jobs. My people criminalized poverty 12 on each other and Oglala. Something happened. 13 That is not who we are. Don't become that. 14 Don't let your kids become that because you want 15 tax relief and school funding and money for your elites. Don't sell out to a federal agency. 16 REGIONAL JUDICIAL OFFICER SUTIN: Ms. Kile, 17 18 I'm sorry. But I asked --19 NANCY KILE: And talk about private 20 property --21 REGIONAL JUDICIAL OFFICER SUTIN: Ms. Kile. 22 NANCY KILE: -- rights. Thank you. 23 REGIONAL JUDICIAL OFFICER SUTIN: Is there 24 anyone else who would like to make a comment? 25 We have five minutes left. Okav. Mr. Matt.

(Comments from Audience Members.)

REGIONAL JUDICIAL OFFICER SUTIN: I will allow both to make comments. When Mr. Matt is done, you can go, Ms. Stands.

DON MATT: When you look at the graph of the price of uranium, it looks like a roller coaster going down, down, down, and just rolling out on the flat.

Now, the question that this raises is, why is this being pushed so hard?

One of the things I heard today was that they have the option of bringing in outside nuclear waste and storing it here. There may not be a market for uranium anytime shortly, but if they are bringing in outside nuclear waste, my concern is, Mr. Hollenbeck has complained about having to jump through countless hoops.

Now, if we start bringing in outside people who have not been reviewed and have not had to jump through those countless hoops, what is happening to our protection?

I would suggest that if outside nuclear waste comes in, that it should be only somebody who has had to jump through every stinking hoop that Mark Hollenbeck has had to jump through.

1 Because they may not have the reliability that 2 Mark has. And that's my final comment. 3 REGIONAL JUDICIAL OFFICER SUTIN: Thank you, Mr. Matt. 4 5 Ms. Stands, you can get up and speak. I 6 will just say that comments need to be addressed 7 to us, not to the audience, and relevant to the 8 decision before us. 9 TONIA STANDS: Okay. 10 REGIONAL JUDICIAL OFFICER SUTIN: Thank you. 11 TONIA STANDS: Yeah, I think everything that 12 I'm talking about is relevant. And I'm Tonia 13 Stands, and I'm from Oglala, South Dakota again. 14 What I want to say is, you know, we have --15 we have this origin story amongst our people, 16 and it goes back, way, way back when this land was all red. 17 18 So, you see the strip that goes around the 19 Black Hills, we're tied to this land and we 20 lived in a time when all the nations, every 21 single animal, nation, had -- we all talked the 22 same language. 23 We had this magical communication between 24 each other. And then we came to this time where 25 we were going to -- we were going to lose that.

So they all came amongst each other, you know. It wasn't one that was on top of the other, or there wasn't a chain of command. They were all equal.

Now, when they came together, they had this great race around the Black Hills. And whoever would win this race was going to be the chosen nation that was going to be the voice.

Because we were going to come into this time exactly right now, when these -- there's every single creature -- you know, you have these crazy words for them. But we don't have those words. Those are our relatives. And we have direct relationships with them still.

And you know, we stand against this uranium because, you know, we come from people that drink out of these rivers. That's why the Cheyenne River people are called Cheyenne River, you know.

It's not this town that's Cheyenne River, it's these people that were forced out of here that migrated that way, were forced onto the reservation, and they are Cheyenne River.

So let that sink in. Okay. There's a whole nation, a reservation that -- that gets direct

impact from this river. And that tells so much.

It connects us to this land, you know.

We have names for these rivers, and they are our relatives that we treat them on human status. They are just like us, and they have families, and we honor that. And we -- and we respect that.

Well, going back to this origin story of the red earth, when the earth was red. Well, you know, they did that great race around the Black Hills and, you know, ever since I was born, ever since I was a baby, my dad took me on that great race.

Every year we run around the Black Hills.

It's called the Sacred Hoop 500-mile run. And

I've been running that for as long as I can

remember. And they -- they keep that. We have

to keep that alive. And we have to be -- we owe

that oath and we owe that duty to these silent

nations that can't talk, that's in those waters.

And we hunt. I can't even hunt no more.

You cut them up, and they are all, like,

deformed, and there's white spots all over them.

And down here, my dad lives, you know, we go on

that river. We can't even go get our boats and

go down the river like we want to. We can't do that on White River, either.

And you know, our tribe monitors these water tests, so I have water tests from our tribe.

And in the spring, when the run-offs come down in this community of Red Shirt, it floods all the way over to where my family lives. And I have to go tell them, Don't go by the river.

Leave the river alone. Go, you know.

And these people in this community, I go down each house, each house like that, and I -- I'm not lying, every one of my relatives in their house has cancer. And my auntie that lives at the corner house, she survived three cancers.

I can't bring them here to tell their story, so I'm here for them. And I'm here for the silent nations that we owe. We owe that oath and that duty to them to speak up for them.

And I never -- I never ever wanted to,

like -- I humble myself and I'm not -- you know,

I'm not -- I don't want to over-exert myself,

but you know what, ever since we've been on this

journey to stand against uranium, these animals,

animals, you know, our relatives, have shown

themselves to us.

We've gone to Wind Cave, and we don't -- we don't -- we don't -- we know the buffaloes are powerful. Those are our people. Those are our relatives. We know that so they -- they come to us and it's like they are -- they are sharing their pain and they are sharing their stories with us.

And you know today, we were just standing out here, we didn't ask for this little turtle to come across. And you know, he went across, and so we took him off the road because we didn't want him to get hit.

Well, when we picked him up and looked at him, his whole beak, his whole little mouth is deformed. I'm like why, why, do they keep showing themselves to us?

You know, we have a duty, and we're fulfilling that duty. And there's no -- they don't -- they don't speak about that. And that is old. That is old. As old as that red dirt is, that is as long as we have to protect this.

And it's a prophesy, and that's what we're fulfilling. They are encroaching and they won't stop. And you know, over here on the winding

side, just like full of uranium. They are coming. They are coming. And our aquifers are going to get destroyed.

It's all going down around us, and this is our, kind of the last, you know, refuge from what's going on around us. And we always live on this, we were raised on this. The Black Hills were never for sale.

With the U.S. government, they have a big bank account. They want us to take that money because they know they stole it. They know that. They have that money. And they want us to take that money, oh, it's like the feel bad money, the guilt money, the blood money, you know, the resource money.

Nothing. We just want it back. We just want to go pray like we always did. We want to have that freedom. And for me, because I've always come here with my grandmas, I want to continue that and keep that alive for them. You know, and I want to see the relatives.

And I'll end on this note. This morning we were leaving. And I really don't believe in these animals coming up to me. I feel like Snow White. But they keep coming.

And this morning in Red Shirt, my boyfriend, he said something, and he, "hagh." He said that. And this bird came out of nowhere and it was eating, and it was, "hagh, hagh" and it was looking down upon us in this tree.

And I said, Look at him, he's saying -- he's laughing at you because you said that. You know, because we were arguing about packing and what to take and what not to take. And then, "hagh," and you know. See, you're supposed to listen to me. See, we were having this little discussion.

Well, this bird was just standing there.

And they never show themselves to us. And I'm telling you, this is a spiritual connection.

And it's older. We can go back through billions of years, not thousands and centuries, billions.

And we can name how the earth, how this universe began. So please remember that. Okay? Thank you.

REGIONAL JUDICIAL OFFICER SUTIN: Thank you very much. Thank you all for coming. We really do appreciate every single comment that was provided by all of you today, the last three days, our day in Valentine. We take all these

comments seriously. We will review them and we will be thoughtful as we move forward in our -- in determining how to move forward with these permits. So I will conclude the -- these hearings today. I will just say one more time, the comment period closes on May 19th, and we will be taking written comments until that time. So, if you have other things that you would like to say that you haven't had a chance to say, please submit your comments. The hearing is now closed. Thank you all. (The proceeding was concluded at 8:07 p.m.)

1	CERTIFICATE
2	
3	STATE OF SOUTH DAKOTA }
4	<pre>} SS: COUNTY OF PENNINGTON }</pre>
5	
6	I, Jacqueline K. Perli, Registered Professional Reporter, do hereby certify that said proceedings were
7	taken by me stenographically and thereafter reduced to typewriting under my supervision; that the foregoing
8	is a true and accurate record of the proceeding to the best of my understanding and ability.
9	I further certify that I am neither counsel for,
10	related to, nor an employee of any of the parties to this case and have no interest, financial or
11	otherwise, in its outcome.
12	
13	Dated this 1st day of June, 2017.
14	/s/ Jacqueline K. Perli
15	Registered Professional Reporter Black Hills Reporting
16	1601 Mt. Rushmore Rd., Ste. 3280 Rapid City, SD 57701
17	605.721.2600 Notary Public
18	My commission expires: May 9, 2019
19	
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